

RESTRICTED

# THE PUNCH

SPECIAL SERIES No. 33

## BELOW THE BELT







# THE PUNCH BELOW THE BELT

Japanese Ruses, Deception Tactics, and Antipersonnel Measures



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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION  
WAR DEPARTMENT • WASHINGTON, D. C.

RESTRICTED

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE  
WAR DEPARTMENT  
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# CONTENTS

	Page		Page
INTRODUCTION. THIS IS YOUR ENEMY	1	CHAPTER 3. AMBUSHES	39
CHAPTER 1. RUSES	3	Hit-and-Run Ambushes	39
Phony Surrender	3	Tactical Ambushes	40
Playing Possum	8	Ambush Along a Trail	42
Friendly Enemies	8	Ambush at a Paddy Field	43
Wolves in Sheep's Clothing	11	CHAPTER 4. SNIPERS	45
Fifth Columnists	15	How	47
Scrap of Paper	18	Where	48
Grab Bag	19	Who	52
CHAPTER 2. DECEPTION TACTICS	23	Tools of the Trade	54
Shoot Me, Please	23	Postscript	55
Inflation	28	CHAPTER 5. CAMOUFLAGE AND DUMMY	
Deflation	29	INSTALLATIONS	57
Infiltration	30	Individual Camouflage	57
Wire Tapping	33	Camouflage of Small Positions	61
Cloaked Fire	34	Camouflaged Fortifications	64
Countermeasures	36	Camouflage of Buildings	72
		Dummy Weapons and Positions	72

	Page		Page
CHAPTER 6. ANTIPERSONNEL MINES.....	79	CHAPTER 7—Continued	
Tape-Measure Mine.....	80	Explosive Groceries.....	96
Nonmetallic Mines.....	81	Souvenir Hunters Beware.....	97
Beach Mines.....	83	More Pull-Type Traps.....	99
Yardstick Mine.....	84	Pressure-Release Traps.....	103
Improvised Mines.....	86	Traps Set with Trip Wires.....	103
CHAPTER 7. BOOBY TRAPS.....	91	Electrical Traps.....	106
Hand-Grenade Pressure Traps.....	91	Delay Traps.....	107
Pull-Type Grenade Traps.....	92	Incendiary Traps.....	108

*Cartoons by T/4 Sam Cobean  
Signal Corps Photographic Center  
Astoria, Long Island*





*Cunning, isn't he?*



*Still cunning—after 20 years of "thought control." Cunning as a rattlesnake.*





## INTRODUCTION. THIS IS YOUR ENEMY

The favorite Jap punch is below the belt. Probably no army in the history of warfare has equalled the Japs in treachery and craftiness. From the sneak raid on Pearl Harbor, through the various Asiatic and Pacific island campaigns, the Japs have used every trick, every deceit to gain advantage. Now, as they're backed tighter and tighter against the wall and know they're fighting a losing, suicidal battle, they can be expected to depart further and further from orthodox tactics, rely more and more on trickery. The first thing any soldier who is to fight against the Japs must learn is that under no circumstances are they to be trusted.

Apart from his skill in deception, the Jap soldier has several outstanding military virtues. He obeys orders implicitly. He fights on until he's killed, even when sick or wounded. His endurance and stamina hold up under the most trying conditions. He can exist in the field on a minimum maintenance commitment. He's unusually skillful at cover, camouflage, and concealment.

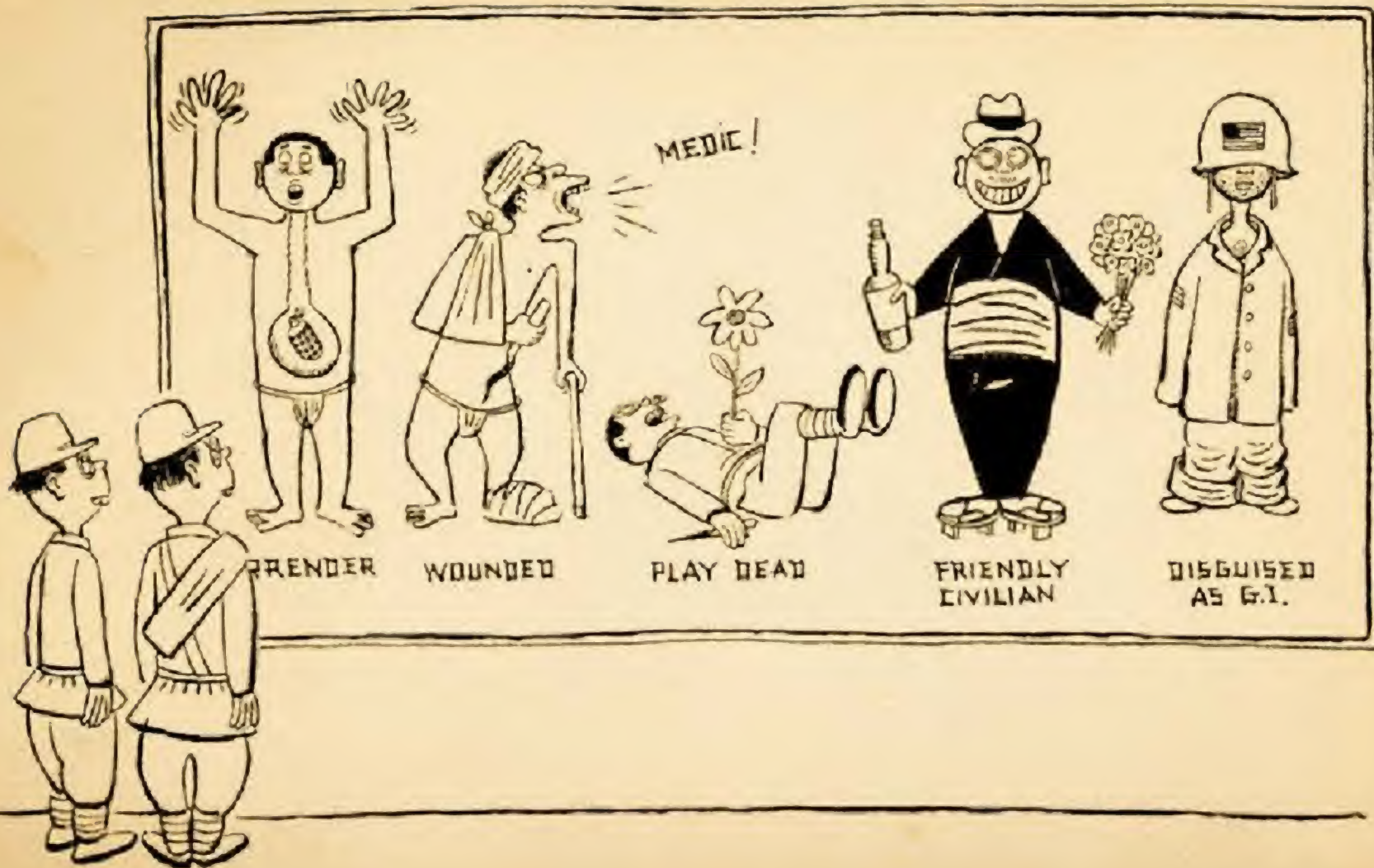
But the Jap soldier also has several outstanding military weaknesses. Rigorously regimented from early

childhood, he has never learned how to think for himself. He's slow in his reactions. He sticks too rigorously to a plan once made and fails to use initiative or imagination in adapting it to changing conditions. As a result of these, he's at a particular disadvantage when surprised.

The way to beat the Jap is to surpass his virtues and take advantage of his weaknesses. A good many of the Jap antipersonnel measures described in the following pages are orthodox military tactics which we already use or can easily learn to use—better than the Jap uses them. The below-the-belt measures can be counteracted by knowing what those measures are and knowing that they all depend on one factor—surprise. The antidote to surprise is alertness.

Only the head of a poisonous snake is dangerous. Only a small part of his head—the fangs; the brain part is pretty inadequate. The more we know about him—the more we use our better brains—the less dangerous he becomes. His one chance is to surprise us. If he fails to do that, his chances against us are zero.







## CHAPTER 1. RUSES

A Jap can invent ruses as easily as a goldbrick can invent diseases. All Jap ruses, however, follow the same basic pattern—making danger appear harmless. A Jap pretends to surrender, he pretends to be wounded or dead, he pretends to be a friendly civilian or one of our troops—all for the purpose of getting us to let down our guard so that he can kill us, capture us, confuse us, or wreck our matériel and installations.

At least 90 percent of reported Jap ruses are built around one of those four deceptions. The remaining 10 percent use different materials but keep to the same pattern.

### PHONY SURRENDER

The Japs have pulled—or tried to pull—the phony surrender in virtually every operation since Pearl Harbor.

It may be a single man pretending to give up—coming forward with hands in the air to prove his good intentions. Then all at once, when he gets within range, hand grenades fly out from his raised hands. Or possibly

the hand grenades or a few Molotov cocktails are hidden—temporarily—inside his clothing. One Jap had the grenade tied to his wrist. He waited until he was very close, then rapped the grenade against his steel helmet and blew up one Jap and several "Yanquis".

#### NOTE:

*A 'ruse' is a trick used by an opponent to make you lower your guard.*





Or the single man may be a decoy. On Kwajalein, a Jap came out of a besieged pillbox with hands stretched and obviously empty. When five of our men went after him, Japs inside the pillbox picked off three of them. In the Philippines, a Jap waved a white flag on a hill. When our troops ceased firing, he motioned for them to come to him, and as they stood up, Japs hidden around the base of the hill opened fire.



A more elaborate example occurred a few days after our Marines landed in the Solomons. A Jap captain walked into a division CP and surrendered. He also surrendered the labor battalion of which he was commander: the men were waiting some distance down the beach, he said, for a detail to be sent out to bring them in. A colonel and a detachment of 20 Marines were sent to the spot in a landing boat. As they stepped ashore, they were all killed except a sergeant, who managed to return, wounded, to base. The Marines who rounded up the Japs shortly afterwards found that instead of belonging to a labor battalion, the Japs were a special weapons detachment, 200 strong.

Here are some other typical examples, chosen at random from action reports:

In New Guinea, a group of Japs cried out in English, "We give up," but blasted the Allied troops who approached to take them prisoner.

On Saipan, Japs hidden in tunnels came out ostensibly to surrender and then opened fire on our troops.

In Leyte, several Japs came toward our positions stating that they wanted to surrender. When they got close enough, they started throwing hand grenades.

The obvious countermeasure to this ruse is to shoot





down every Jap who offers to surrender. But prisoners are very valuable for intelligence purposes. Our troops in the field have worked out a better solution. They insist that Japs who offer to surrender strip to the skin before they're allowed to come forward; if an interpreter isn't handy, it's easy enough to get this across by sign

language. Only one of our troops exposes himself to accept the surrender; the rest of the unit remains concealed, covering him by fire. Prisoners are made to walk with both hands on top of their heads, and they aren't permitted to approach close enough to kick their captor in the groin. Captured Japs are never used as guides.





*This Jap, half buried in volcanic ash, looks 100% dead. But the Marine at the edge of the shell crater isn't so sure; he sees a hand grenade within easy reach of the corpse's right hand.*



*The corpse has come alive. But he's covered by M1 carbines and the Marine standing near him has appropriated his grenade. The Jap, in dumb show, offers to surrender in exchange for a cigaret.*





*The bargain is sealed with a half-smoked cigaret. The Marine, however, carefully keeps his distance, and the Jap isn't allowed to get up; there may be a pull-type booby trap attached to his body.*



*The Marines tie a rope to the Jap's wrists and drag him up the crater. Nothing goes off. Now it's a job for the litter bearers. (A Leatherneck Magazine photographer snapped this sequence on Iwo Jima.)*



## PLAYING POSSUM

Playing dead or wounded is another trick the Japs have tried during nearly every operation. Sometimes it's merely to save their own skin. But more often it's a ruse to get behind their enemy. After he passes, they come to life and open fire or throw hand grenades at his back.

In the heat of battle or in jungle or broken country, playing possum is fairly easy. But the Japs often rely not on concealment but on their own ability to remain motionless for long periods. On Kwajalein, for example, enemy soldiers lay in full view among the bodies of



Japanese dead, biding their time until worthwhile targets should present themselves. A U. S. junior officer stood close beside one of these live corpses for a considerable period, presenting a perfect target. But the Jap didn't bother to shoot him. He remained dead until several others had joined the first officer.

Moral: Never trust even a dead Jap. Turn every apparently dead Jap face up—after making sure he isn't booby-trapped; remove his weapons and make sure he's really dead.

## FRIENDLY ENEMIES

The Japs also favor the trick of using the language of their enemy to lure him to his death or to create confusion. During the Makin operation, just before dawn an unarmed Jap appeared on the lagoon shore crying, "Reveille, fellows. Get up! Reveille!" Another time on Makin, a Jap yelled out, "Hey, Charlie, where's my buddy?"

During another operation, the officer leading a Jap attack gave the order, "Charge!" in English, and during the progress of the attack a Jap shouted, "Take that gun to the left flank."





In the Admiralties, Japs fighting among Allied dug-in positions would shout, "Move over, Joe! I'm coming in."

In the fighting in Southeast Asia, Jap intelligence personnel were often located with the advance guards to confuse Allied troops by speaking out in Malay, Tamil, Hindustani, Gurkhali, English, or Dutch—depending on the units in contact. During a night attack, Japs called out in Dutch for the whereabouts of the Dutch commander, and shot the commander when he answered.

During a night attack by Japanese tanks on Guam, a

Jap on top of the first tank cried out, "American tank—Okay, American tank—Okay!"

On Ramree Island in Burma, a rare Jap with a sense of humor who had worked his way close to our perimeter called out "Hello, Corporal; take this," and threw a hand grenade.

On occasions when they have known American, Australian, or British troops to be near, Japs have chatted among themselves in English to put the Allied troops off their guard and lure them into ambush. On Biak, one





AMERICAN TANK!  
AMERICAN TANK!





evening at twilight eight or ten Japs, holding a conversation in English, strolled casually into our tank park. They stopped near some of the tanks while they talked about horse racing at Santa Anita. Then they continued through the bivouac, arousing no suspicion until they tried to return later on. The Japs turned tail as soon as they were discovered, but not without leaving behind several demolitions.

In several areas the Japs have managed to learn the names of officers or men occupying our forward posts and have called out to them in English by name. This sometimes had the purpose of putting them off their guard, so that Japs might infiltrate; sometimes of making them reveal themselves to enemy fire; sometimes of simply confusing them. Merrill's Marauders reported that during their North Burma campaign, Japs would frequently shout "Ding How," which are the words—equivalent to our "OK"—that the Chinese often use to identify themselves to British or Americans.

This ruse sometimes has a more tactical application. Jap troops in the Admiralties managed to learn the names of officers commanding our platoons. During the heat of an action, a Jap yelled, "Retreat, Green, the whole regiment's falling back to another line." Lt. Green's platoon

promptly left its positions. In the Solomons, Japs who had infiltrated to our flanks and rear shouted "Withdraw!" when the frontal attack began to develop in force. During the same operation the Japs placed smoke on Marine positions and then charged forward shouting "Gas!".

Nine times out of ten, the Jap's accent will give him away when he tries this ruse. The tenth time can be counteracted by alertness; by avoiding loud talking in close contact with the enemy; and by the use of code names and recognition signals changed frequently.

## WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING







Time and again, in every theater, the Japs have worn Allied uniforms and civilian clothing to deceive their enemies.

In Southeast Asia, Jap troops wearing uniforms resembling the Chinese succeeded in capturing Allied soldiers by using a friendly signal they had learned from fifth columnists. Other Japs in this theater dressed in British and Dutch uniforms and steel helmets. In Malaya, the Japs took advantage of the difficulty in distinguishing Japanese from Malaysians or resident Chinese

by dressing as civilians and hiding their guns until they could spring a surprise attack.

In New Georgia, the Japs wore cut out circular boards over their hats to imitate the headgear of Australian troops, and in the Solomons our troops found dead Japs wearing American helmets. Among the Japs killed in the Admiralties were some dressed in U. S. fatigue suits and helmets.

During one of the battles on Biak, a U. S. tank momentarily lost its fire protection. At that moment a Jap





dressed in an American uniform climbed onto the tank and dropped a grenade inside it.

Japs dressed in U. S. uniforms were also encountered on Saipan. One group of these waited in the open until U. S. troops moved close, then opened fire with automatic weapons. Members of a Jap unit in the Philippines were ordered by their commanding officer to wear native clothing and were prohibited from cutting their hair. Helmets and weapons were concealed under their clothing. On Leyte, a group of about 30 Japanese troops



came toward American positions dressed as Filipino women. On one occasion, they drove water buffalo toward the perimeter and followed in behind the animals.

A particularly successful Jap ruse involving disguise was reported recently from the Philippines. At about 0100 one night, an officer and three enlisted men, all dressed in U. S. uniforms and riding in a U. S. ¼-ton truck, came up to a sentry posted near Olongapo, Luzon. The officer asked the guard in perfect English where he



might find headquarters, and was directed to its general area. Within 30 minutes this detail, all Japs, had destroyed with demolitions several heavy guns, trucks, and a small supply dump, as well as causing casualties among U. S. personnel from the explosions and gunfire during the manhunt that followed.

Another use the Japs make of Allied uniforms is to lie in trails simulating Allied wounded and dead in order to ambush patrols.

This disguise ruse—which the Japs were still using on Okinawa—requires special precautions. Treat all unknown individuals with suspicion, covering them with fire until they have properly identified themselves. Know all troops in the area, and make proper use of recognition signals, changing them frequently. Take nothing for granted; don't let strangers get within grenade or bayonet range without positive identification. Be suspicious of all bodies no matter what uniform they wear.

Sometimes the Japs use civilians or Allied troops for actual cover. In Malaya, captured Indians were forced to move in front of attacking Jap troops and call out to the Indian troops to hold their fire. As a party of 15 Japs advanced by night against U. S. positions on Makin,





troops in the forward positions heard a woman's voice crying, "Bad boy, bad boy." Our men reluctantly opened fire with their BAR's. The next morning, they found two bodies—one a Jap and one a native girl the Japs had used as a decoy.



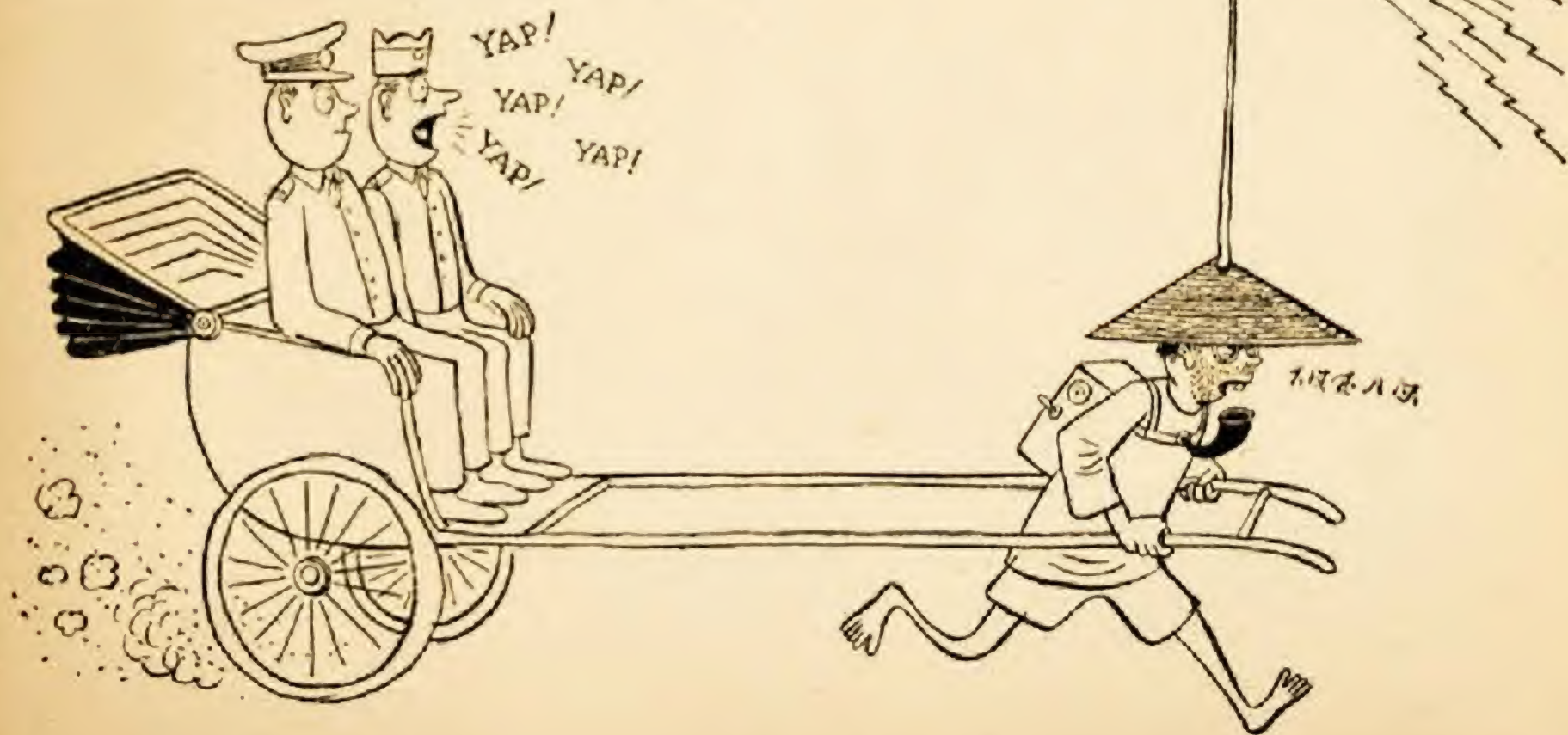
During the same operation, a group of 20 or 25 natives came into our lines after dark. The sentries heard children crying and talking and held their fire. About 10 minutes later a group of Jap soldiers came down the road. They tried to imitate a baby's crying, but the trick was recognized. The Japs may or may not have

deliberately driven these natives into our lines as decoys. But at any rate, they took advantage of their presence.

### FIFTH COLUMNISTS

The natives used in those ruses were presumably innocent. Other natives have willingly collaborated with the

Japs for pay or other reasons. The Japs have made the widest use of fifth columnists, particularly in China and Southeast Asia where quislings were elaborately organized as government bureaus. In the Pacific, the Japs made the mistake of antagonizing the natives of occupied areas





by brutal treatment or by violating local taboos. Even so, there were many whose treachery was for sale.

A list of the services performed by Jap-hired fifth columnists would fill this book. Here are just a few examples that have come to light:

Malayan natives spotted Allied defenses for attacking Jap ground troops by pointing the arms of brightly-clothed scarecrows or scattering salt, rice, and white paper on the roads. They indicated motor transport parks or command posts by pointing banana leaves, laundry, or planks. They pinpointed targets for Jap planes by trampling or cutting arrows in rice fields, and signaled to Jap landing boats with lights.

During the Jap invasion of Burma, fifth columnists placed "puncture traps" on the roads to damage or delay Allied motor vehicles. A screen of natives moved ahead of advancing Jap troops, sending back information about defending troops as they moved from place to place. Any ambush set to trap the Japs was usually given away by these quislings.

Soft-drink vendors in Southeast Asia signaled to the Japs with a flag after serving Allied troops free drinks.

German missionaries in New Guinea guided the Japs through the jungle to contact Australian forces.

Civilians drove their private cars to bridges prepared for demolition by the Allies, so that Jap troops hidden in the cars could shoot the troops guarding the bridges.

A civilian fifth columnist walked about 50 yards in front of a Jap patrol and engaged opposing troops in conversation while the patrol took up firing positions.

Civilians from occupied areas who knew the names of Allied troops previously stationed there called out to Allied troops by name and told them not to fire.







Fake missionaries established secret radio transmitting and receiving stations in cemeteries, abandoned quarries, and houses near airports. The tallest building in Singapore wasn't touched by Jap shelling because fifth columnists operated a radio station there.

The only way to avoid incidents like these is by rigid control of all natives. They must not be allowed near vital installations and fighting areas. Native police of proven integrity can be a great help in this control.

### SCRAP OF PAPER

The Japs have given copious evidence that they regard the Geneva Convention in much the same way as the World War I Germans regarded the Belgian Neutrality Treaty. They're very anxious for all other nations to abide by it to the letter. But they don't hesitate to violate it when it suits their purpose.

Here, out of many others, are three examples from a single operation—the Solomons:

To avoid bombing, the Japs painted red crosses on buildings occupied by troops. One of the "hospitals" turned out to be an ammunition dump.

While an American medical officer was dressing the





wounded leg of a Jap soldier, the Jap pulled a knife and stabbed him.

A group of Japanese nurses walked up to our wounded with their hands raised, and proceeded to throw hand grenades among the casualties.

### GRAB BAG

Here are some assorted Jap ruses that don't fit under any of the previous headings:

Jap planes dropped leaflets and returned soon afterwards to drop bombs on Allied soldiers who came out in the open to pick them up.

Jap ships approaching a landing place in the Philippines flew the American flag.

In the Solomons, Japs hired natives to inform our headquarters that they had concealed groups of wounded Marines, and to offer to guide our rescue forces to the men. Our men were guided, instead, into ambushes.



Among the large quantities of Jap-manufactured liquor found on Saipan were bottles of wood alcohol bearing Burgundy labels.

On Leyte, Jap paratroopers who succeeded in getting through our perimeter whistled and sang while booby-trapping two of our cub planes, to pass themselves off as U. S. ground-crew men. The same ruse flopped when they tried to pass back.

These are only samples. It may be one of these ruses the Jap tries against you. Or it may be a new one. But it will follow the same basic pattern of making danger appear harmless, and it will depend for its success on relaxed attention.

Or to put it the other way around, it will fail if you keep your wits about you.

### IMPORTANT:

*Very often you can successfully employ the same ruses used by your opponent.*

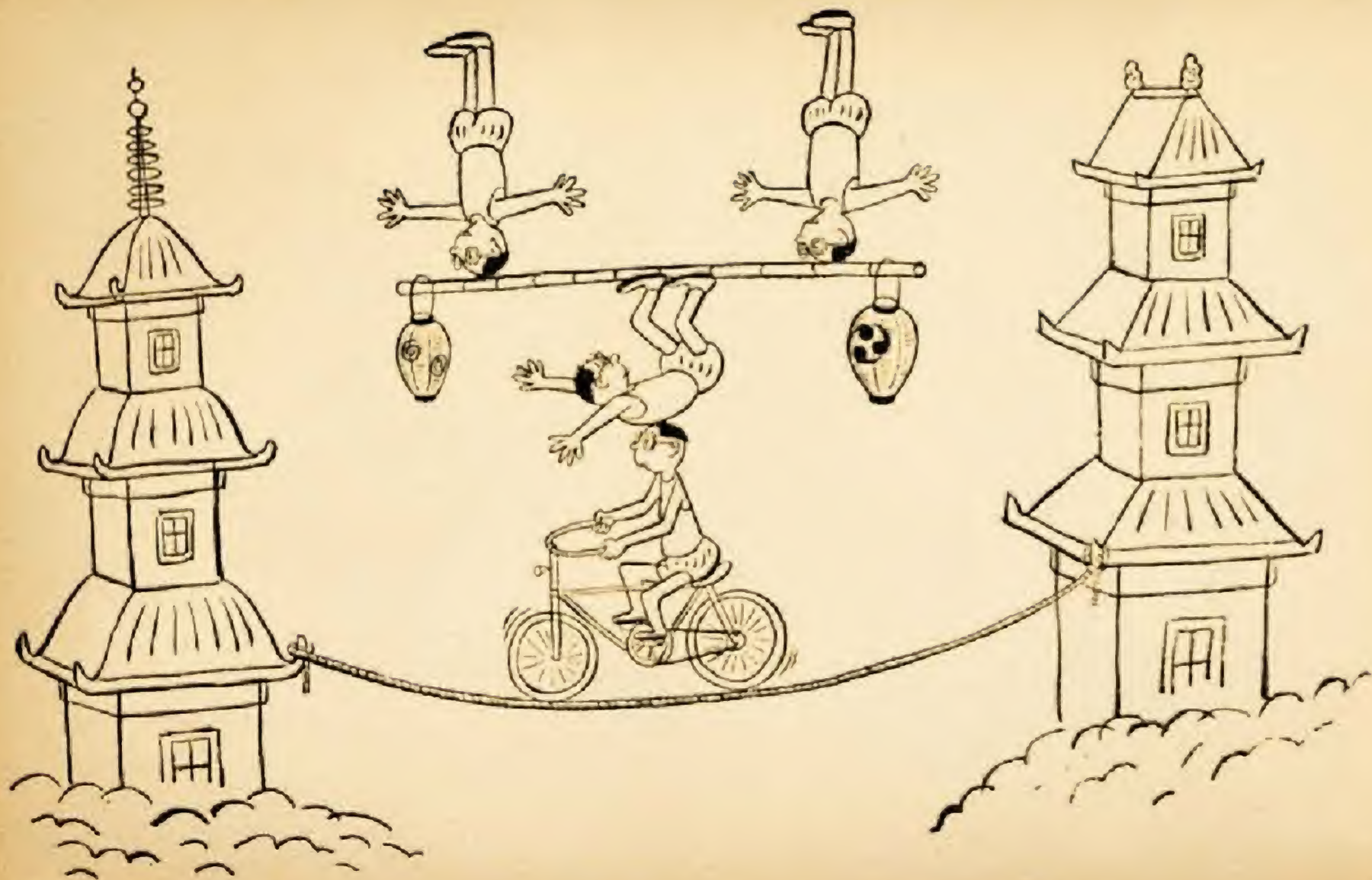




*These Japs tried to get through our  
lines on Okinawa by Routine Ruse  
No. 3—covering their uniforms with  
civilian kimonos. But a U. S. Marine  
was on the ball.*









## CHAPTER 2. DECEPTION TACTICS

Most of the deception tactics of the Japs are routine measures used by every army to give a false impression of its strength or intentions. The only difference is that the Japs go to further extremes—in both directions. Some of their deception tactics are highly crafty. Others are ridiculous. But even their most ridiculous tricks sometimes succeed simply because no one who is not a Jap would believe that a full-grown man could seriously try to pull such a childish trick.

### SHOOT ME, PLEASE

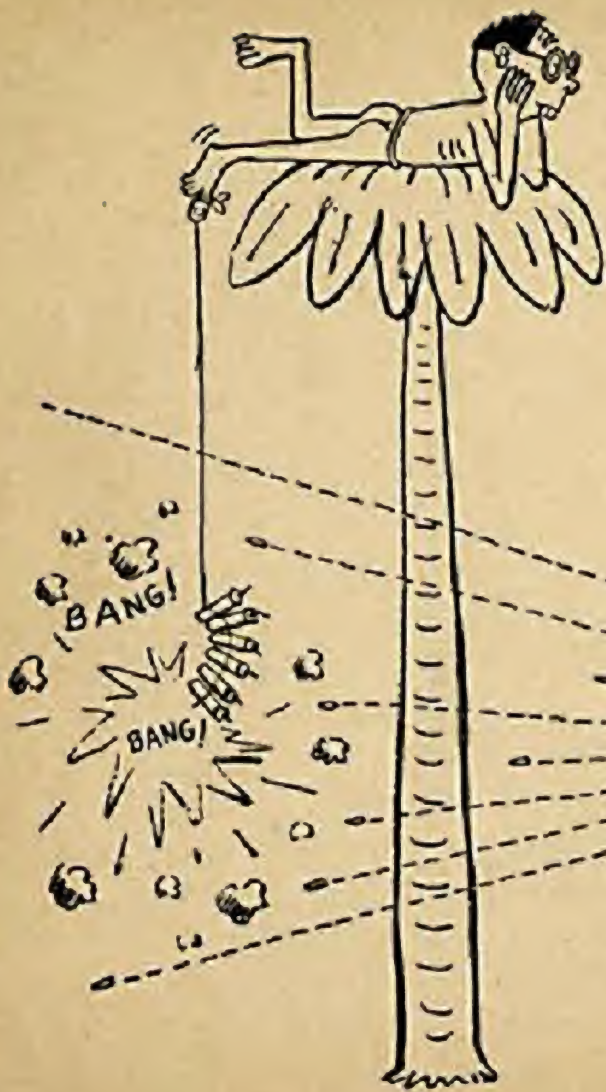
The fire discipline of the Japs is, by and large, unusually good. The fire discipline of the troops facing them has sometimes proved less good, particularly when the troops are green and fighting in unfamiliar tropical country where every tree may hide an enemy sniper, every rock may be alive; and where the enemy does most of his fighting by night. Jap "jitter patrols" go to every possible pain to exploit the trigger-nervousness of their opponents. As their opponents become cannier, they rack their sly brains to invent new tricks.

Routine Jap tricks to draw premature fire that will give away their enemy's positions are firing their own weapons at random; shooting off firecrackers; rapping on bamboo sticks in machine-gun tempo; lighting matches; flashing flashlights; talking loudly or yelling. Meanwhile Jap snipers or observers are posted where they can spot the source of any fire that may be drawn. The spotters often infiltrate inside the Allied lines for better observation.

Those are the cruder tricks. When the Japs are up against seasoned opponents who know how silently the Japs normally operate, less obvious methods are needed. One or two Japs will move about at night near our perimeter, making just enough noise to be heard but not enough to make it seem deliberate. When our troops fire an automatic weapon in the direction of the movement, Jap snipers shoot tracers at the weapon, enabling a mortar to open up on the position.

Or a Jap will run a rope to a bush near an Allied outpost or perimeter, then shake the bush from a position where he can spot any weapon that fires, without being





in danger himself. Or perhaps the rope is attached to the trigger of a light machine gun, which the Jap will operate by remote control and hope to draw retaliatory fire.

Another method, first spotted on Guadalcanal, is for a hidden Jap to work his rifle bolt back and forth. A refinement of this method was used in New Guinea. The Japs designed a simple mechanical device that would imitate the clicking of rifle bolts. This was attached to a bush, and operated from a distance by jerking a rope.





Incidentally, the firecrackers mentioned above are always thrown off to one side of the Jap who lights them. Other things being equal, even a Jap prefers living to dying.

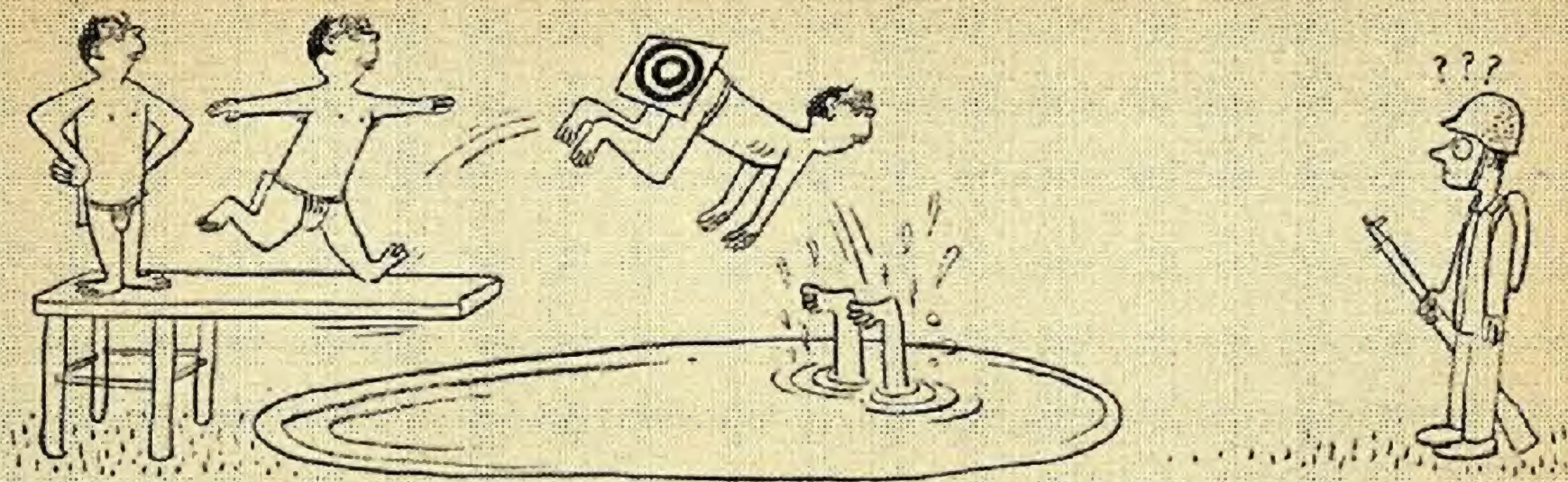
However, if these tactics fail, the Jap will use his own body to lure fire. He'll launch a one-man banzai charge directly in the face of a suspected Allied position. The men occupying the position are faced with the choice of shooting the Jap down, and thus playing into his hands, or of dealing with a fanatic who has kissed his life good-by running amok in their midst.

As soon as fire is opened on him, the Jap of course hits the dirt, while other Japs, who drew longer ends of the stick and are in safe cover, spot the weapons firing on him.

On at least one occasion, the man who charged forward in this way carried only a flag. Other times, at night, the Jap was armed with a Tommy gun and tracer ammunition which he fired in short bursts at places suspected to be occupied. When he was fired on, he flattened out while his friends to the rear or on the flanks tried to locate our weapons. If he failed to receive fire from one likely position, he moved on to another—all the while closing in on our positions until someone







eventually let go at him with an automatic weapon.

An extreme example of this use of live decoys to draw fire took place in the Netherlands East Indies where the Japs placed soldiers in an exposed swimming pool to draw the fire of Dutch machine guns they weren't able to locate otherwise.

An even more extreme example, with a different slant, occurred during the campaign on Leyte. Here the Japs

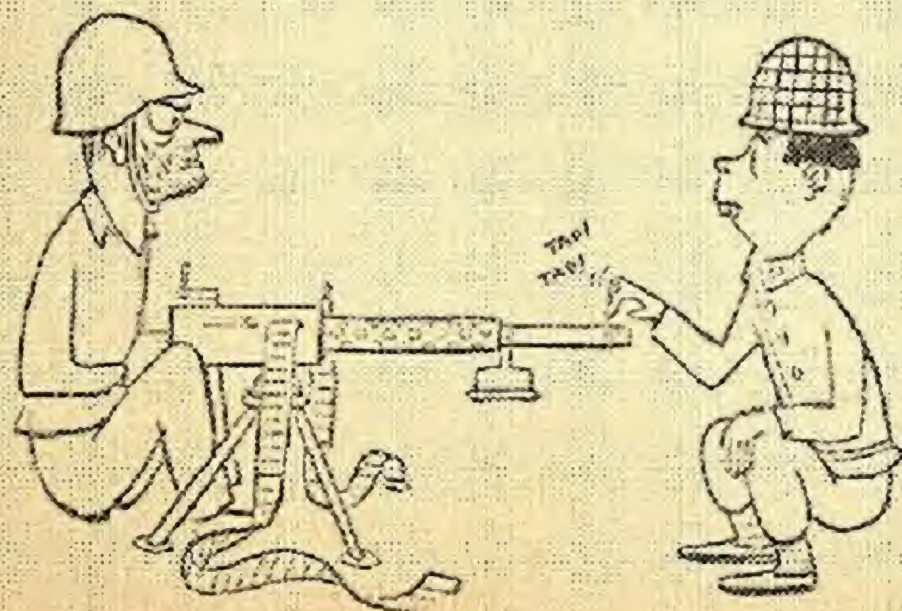
went to particular pains to discover the location of the heavy machine guns on our perimeter defense at night, and staged frequent small banzai charges to try to get the guns to open up. One night, an Allied machine gunner was actually tapped on the shoulder by a Jap who had crawled up alongside in an attempt to get the gunner to fire.

On Makin, Japs dashed back and forth across the



road to draw our fire. Troops in the underbrush yelled "Heil Hitler!", "Blood for the Emperor!", and sometimes American names.

In Burma, the Japs often used dogs to attract fire, and an artillery post in that theater reported that the Japs tried to force our troops to reveal their positions by firing a single shot that was followed at once by a Very light, so that any movement could be observed.



On Guam, a single enemy soldier occasionally walked slowly toward our lines, as though unaware of any danger. Fire from all directions easily knocked him down, but this gave away our positions.

Occasionally one of these tricks may involve only one or two isolated Japs in a hurry to join their ancestors. But our troops have learned by bitter experience that the one or two Japs—or the shots over their heads that appear to be just bad shooting—are generally plants. A mortar or machine gun or sniper or raiding party is posted to take advantage of anyone who bites.





## INFLATION

Jap tactics for simulating strength are fairly routine—on paper. In a pitch-black jungle, on a pint-size coral atoll, 5,000 miles from home, they're not quite so easy to laugh off—particularly when the demonstration is made in your rear, which is the Jap's favorite fighting spot.

When the Japs stage an attack, they generally try to infiltrate beforehand a part of their force well inside their enemy's line. These troops, when the attack is

launched, yell, set off firecrackers, rap bamboo sticks or stones to imitate machine-gun fire, run from tree to tree shooting automatic weapons to give the impression that a large force has encircled the defenders. This is timed to coincide with the frontal or flank attacks, which are often accompanied by the same sort of demonstrations.

Demonstrations are also frequently staged to create confusion that will enable infiltrators to slip through, or to cover a raid on a command post, ammunition dump, artillery position, or communications. On Leyte, for example, a 105-mm howitzer was successfully satchel-charged by two Japs under cover of a rifle-firing diversionary group.

Or the demonstration may be designed to build up a diversionary attack to make it appear the main show. Diversionary attacks are practically SOP with the Japanese. Sometimes these are made by small parties trying to sound like a large force. They may throw stones in place of shooting, or the cartridges they fire may be blanks; they're interested not in inflicting casualties but in confusing their enemy. At other times the diversionary attack may be nearly as aggressive as the main attack.

A crafty refinement of the diversionary attack was reported from the Arakan. On several occasions the Japs



appeared to have detached a small party from the main body and set up a decoy position. Using paper bullets, this detachment would fire directly into the main body of Japanese troops. This fooled our troops—or did the first time—three ways. They thought the Japs didn't know their location; they were confused as to the position of the main body of Japs; and what they thought was surely the safest direction in their vicinity was actually the most dangerous, from which a surprise assault was shortly launched.

During the fighting on Ramree Island and near Kangaw in Burma, the Japs flashed lights from nearby hills to make us believe the hills were occupied. When this first happened, our artillery fired a considerable concentration onto the hills. Later we learned that the hills were unoccupied. The Japs had cut notches in trees and placed oil-soaked rags or some similar material in the notches to make a light.

In another Burma area, the Japs put up dummy men to fool the opposing troops. The dummies may have been corpses. On several occasions they have dropped false sketches of their positions along roads or trails, hoping that their enemy would waste ammunition shelling a nonexistent position.



## DEFLATION

The Japs don't always try to appear stronger than they are. Often they try to appear weaker, or even nonexistent. Jap methods of concealment and camouflage are discussed in Chapter 5. The point to be made here is that their concealment and camouflage are not intended merely to protect them from observation and attack. They have an offensive purpose as well. Concealment and surprise are the backbone of Jap offensive tactics.

In suitable terrain, Japs will purposely let themselves



be overrun, so that they may strike at their enemy's rear rather than face his direct attack—change over from the defensive to the offensive. Lying "doggo" in their pillboxes or foxholes, they let the first assault troops go past in the belief that they have retreated or been killed. Once the first wave has passed, the Japs rise up in its rear.

Another Jap trick involving concealment of strength is for a good-sized force to make a direct charge on our positions. In the face of withering machine-gun fire, the force turns tail. When our men, with the usual cry of "After the ———," rush after them with fixed bayonets, the fleeing Japs drop to the ground and Jap machine guns to the rear open up.

Jap patrols often withdraw from Japanese-held areas while these are being scoured by our patrols. While our patrols report back with the information that the enemy has fled, the Japs reoccupy the area with a large force. Then, when we confidently move a force into the area, the Japs open up with murderous fire at close range.

Sometimes they play it the opposite way. When we put heavy artillery fire on them, they crawl up close to our lines, inside the barrage. Moreover, while they're up there, they put light mortar fire on us during our

own barrage. When our barrage lifts, they slip back.

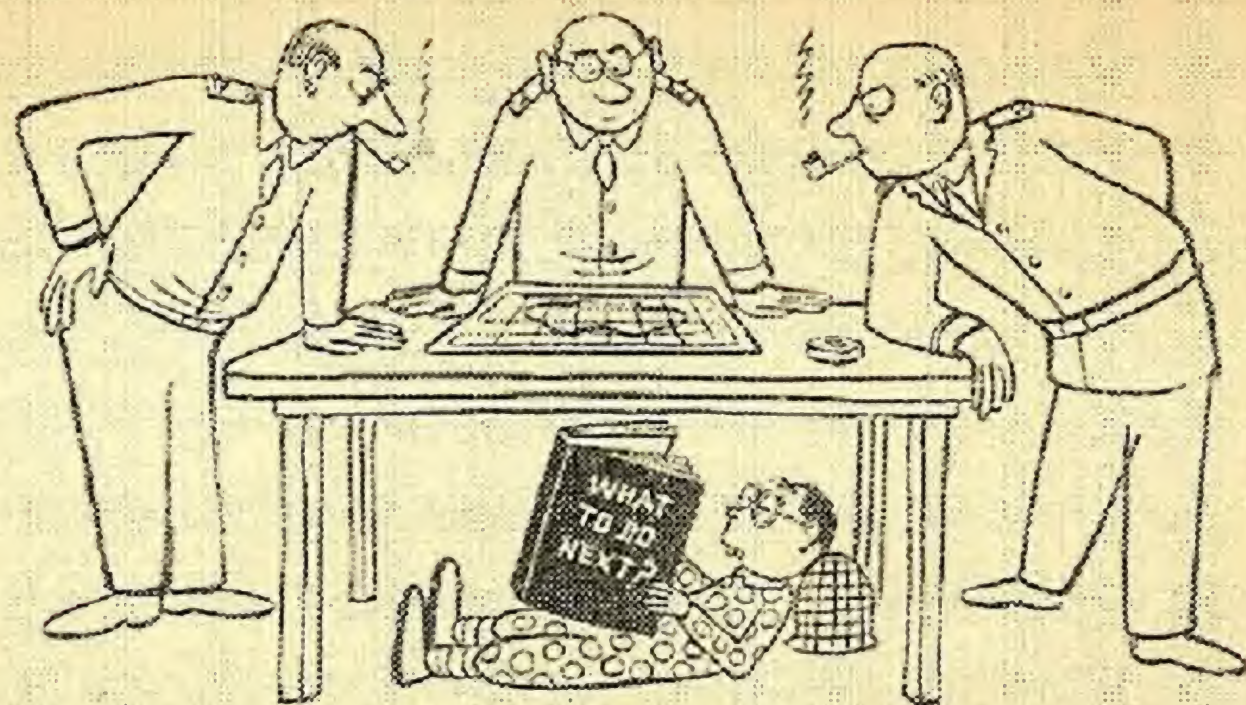
At other times they feign panic and disorganized retreat, strewing their line of withdrawal with supplies and equipment—all carefully covered by concealed machine guns.

Another trick to disguise their presence is to fire captured weapons to give the impression that our troops, rather than theirs, occupy the position where the weapons are sited.

## INFILTRATION







The Jap's liking for infiltrating within his enemy's lines is well known. In many cases, this is done by simple stealth under the cover of night, favorable terrain, covering fire, our own fire or noise, or diversions of the sorts mentioned above. A striking example of the stealth of Jap infiltrators was reported from the Admiralties. An American major, sleeping in a hammock in

the headquarters area, had his throat cut by a Jap infiltrator. An officer in a foxhole only a few feet away stated that he was on the alert and didn't notice the Jap who killed the major until the hammock rocked violently.

Another example: On Manus Island our ammunition carriers found Japs walking beside them between the gun positions and the ammunition dumps.

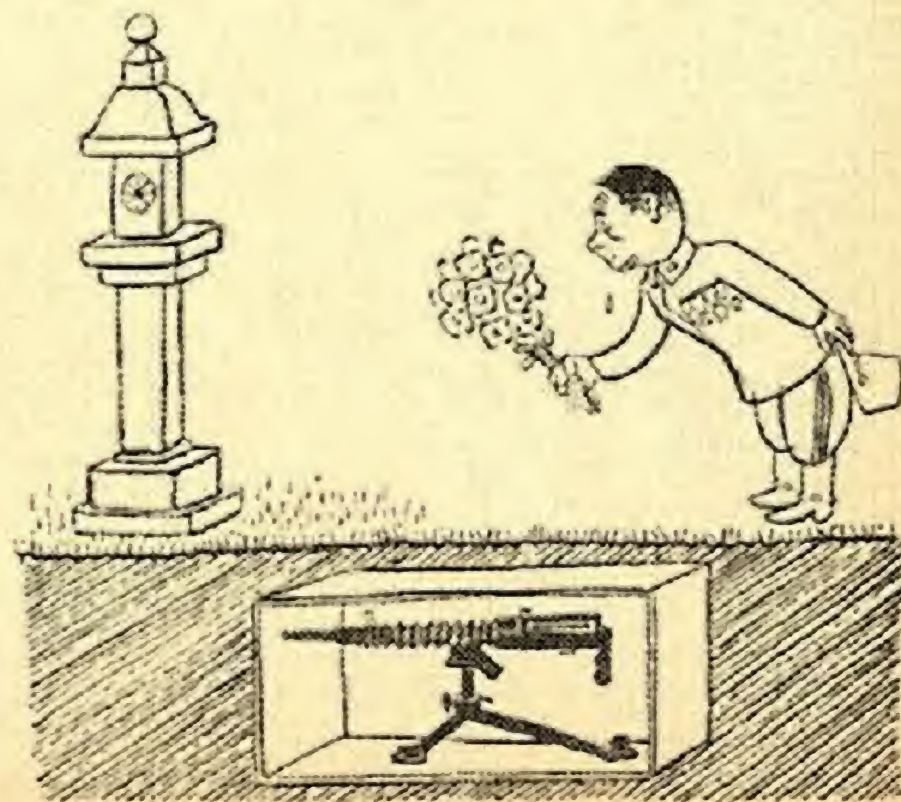


In other cases, the infiltrating is done brazenly by Japs impersonating civilians or friendly troops.

Or the infiltration may be done by sheer force. A frontal assault is made, by night, with the object not of advancing the Jap line but of passing as many men as possible inside our line. As a sample of the Japanese military mentality, there have been times when large numbers of Jap troops have managed to infiltrate far within our lines in the course of an all-out banzai charge. But the infiltrators had no instructions as to what they were to do once they had infiltrated. Consequently they spent the next few days trying to sneak back to their own lines.

In still other cases, the infiltration only appears to be infiltration. The "infiltrators" are Jap troops who have purposely allowed themselves to be overrun or bypassed. This, again, may be done simply by remaining concealed. Or it may be brought about by a ruse. During the night, Jap troops will drive a salient into the Allied perimeter; then allow themselves to be repulsed at first light. Some of them, however, remain behind, concealed with automatic weapons in the tops of coconut palms or other hiding places, to harass our advance.

Our troops have often been surprised to find Japs who have infiltrated within their lines over virtually impassable country using heavy Japanese equipment. The explanation is simple. Before the Japs were driven out of the area, they buried the equipment, well oiled and greased, and dug it up when they sneaked back. In at





least one instance, innocent-looking Jap graves, reverently and neatly fenced in, were used for this purpose. Twelve "graves" were opened in an area where a Jap spearhead had been slashed off. In only one was there a body. The others were filled with war matériel, including three 75-mm guns, two 37-mm guns, more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition, a dozen combination telephone-telegraph sets, and five rolls of telephone wire.

A sort of step-sister of infiltration is this tactic of the Japs: When they have located our perimeter, they fire their machine guns about waist high over our position. Then they send a group of men crawling in under their own fire. They crawl very slowly until they feel the edge of a foxhole. Then they back away a bit and throw in hand grenades.

## WIRE TAPPING

The Japs have shown themselves fairly adept at wire tapping and cutting in on radio circuits.

In the Admiralties, an Allied 90-mm AA battery was tapped on several occasions between 2230 and midnight, the wire tapper claiming to be, on one occasion, a certain officer commanding a platoon, and on another, a sergeant. He announced in each case the disruption of our

plans and the success of the enemy. Since his voice wasn't recognized, his messages weren't heeded. But a later message, believed to be false, resulted in a change of command posts.

INFORMATION  
PLEASE!





In another case of tapping in the same area, the voice over the wire pleaded, to the accompaniment of groaning and sighing, "For God's sake, lift that mortar fire."

On one of the small islands in the Solomons, our Marines ran into tough fortified opposition and called for 1,000-pound demolition bombs. The group air commander of an aircraft carrier was directed to bomb the island, but on his way there received a counterorder stating that the Marines had secured the island and the mission was called off. Fortunately, the Jap who had cut in, although he spoke English with a perfect American accent, wasn't able to furnish the authenticating code word.

A Marine colonel sent back this example from Guadalcanal: "In the Raiders we adopted the custom of dropping all ranks and titles. We used code names for the officers. All ranks use these code names for us. We did this because the Nips caught on to the names of the officers and would yell or speak in the night: 'This is Captain Joe Smith talking. "A" Company withdraw to the next hill.' So we adopted code names. Captain Walt becomes 'Silent Lou'. My code name was 'Red Mike'. An example of the use of these code names is: One night the Japs put down smoke and they yelled

'Gas'. We were green at that time and two of our companies withdrew leaving 'A' Company exposed on its two flanks. I was battalion commander. Captain Walt called me on the voice radio to inform me of the situation. He was cautious and used code names as follows: He said, 'Who is speaking?' and I said, 'Red'. He said, 'What name do you identify with Silent?' and I said, 'Lou'. He said, 'That is correct'. So we both knew that we were talking to each other and were not talking to the enemy. He explained the situation to me. At the end of his conversation, a voice broke in and said in perfect English, 'Our situation here, Colonel Edson, is excellent. Thank you, sir. This is the enemy speaking.' This should be taken as an example of how quick the Japanese are at interception, rather than a hard-and-fast suggestion as to how to outwit them. Any code names such as these will have to be changed very frequently—if possible, daily."

## CLOAKED FIRE

The Japs very often time the firing of their artillery and mortars to our fire, to make us believe our own artillery support is falling short. When our barrage or harassing fire opens, they open theirs; when ours stops,



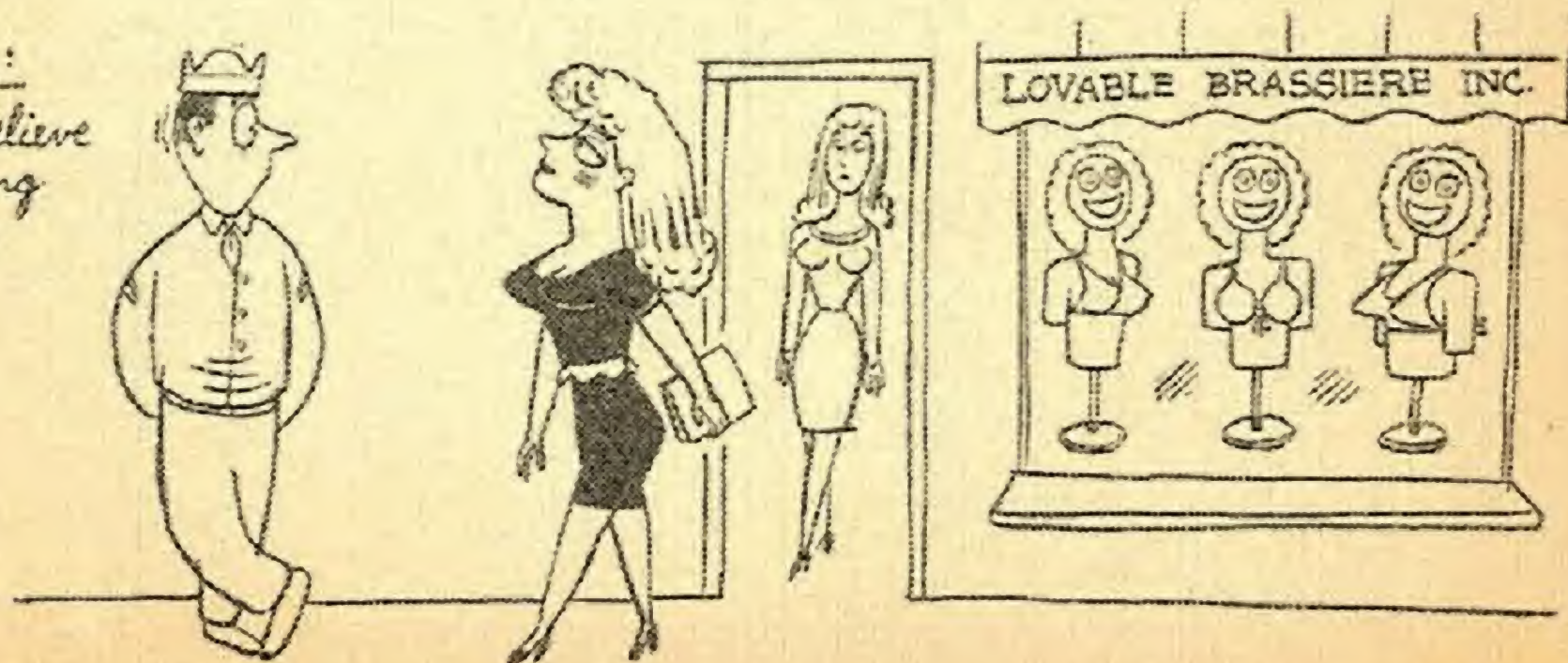
their stops. This is especially effective in jungle areas, where visibility is poor, the fighting is usually split up into numerous separate actions, communication is difficult, and the rapidly-changing front-line positions are often inaccurately reported and mapped. The tactic was reported as early as Guadalcanal, and is still being widely used. Its effect on the morale of troops who don't recognize it for a trick can be considerable.

By the same method of cloaking the sound of their firing inside ours, the Japs hide their gun positions and keep us guessing as to their fire power. They apply this not only to artillery and mortar fire, but to machine-gun and rifle fire as well.

Another Jap trick is to let our mortar men fire their piece until they feel they are safe. Then the Japs crack down on the position.

MORAL:

*Don't believe  
everything  
you see.*







## COUNTERMEASURES

The countermeasures to Jap deception tactics are pretty elementary. First and foremost, maintain strict fire discipline at all times. Don't play into the Japs' hands by revealing your position with a premature shot.

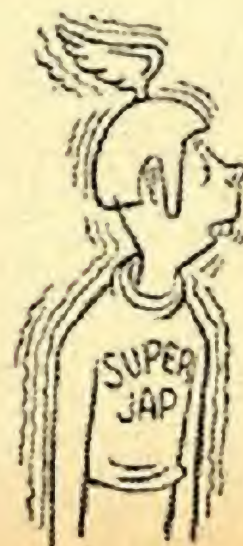
But what about the berserk Jap with the Tommy gun who comes charging straight towards your foxhole?

That's what grenades are for. That's why you carry that trench knife. He doesn't know your foxhole is there. If he did, he wouldn't have to risk his life finding out.

There's a proper weapon for every purpose, and a

proper moment to begin using it. Also, there are two ways of following a fleeing enemy. One is to run after him, exposing yourself. Another is to follow him with fire.

Second, take it easy. That, of course, is sometimes easier said than done. But remember this: a Jap soldier can get nervous, too. He's been told that all Americans are butchers and that he'll be systematically tortured if he's captured. Remember this, also: when an infiltrating Jap works his way behind you, that means that *you're* behind *him*. And he's alone or a member of a very small group.



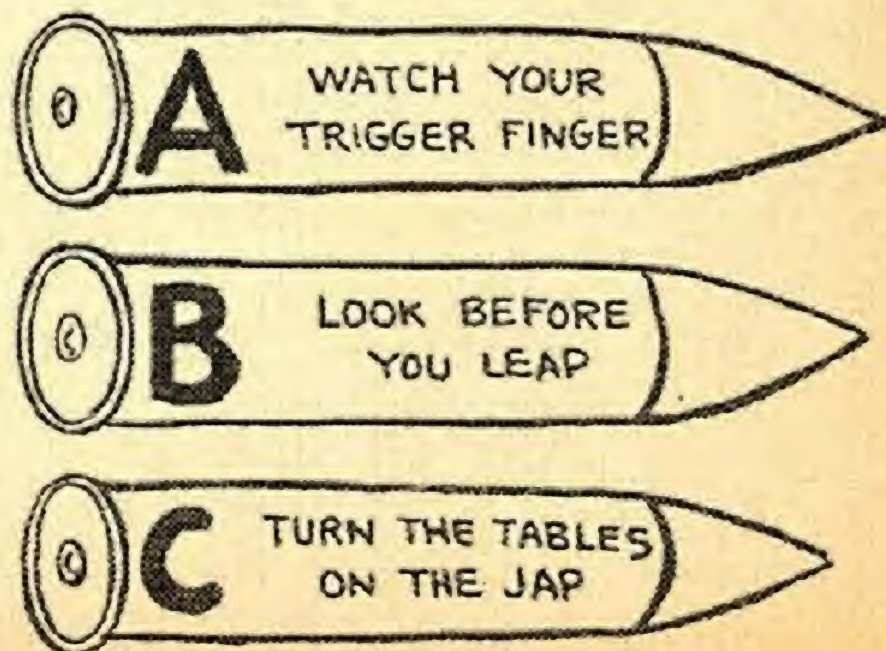




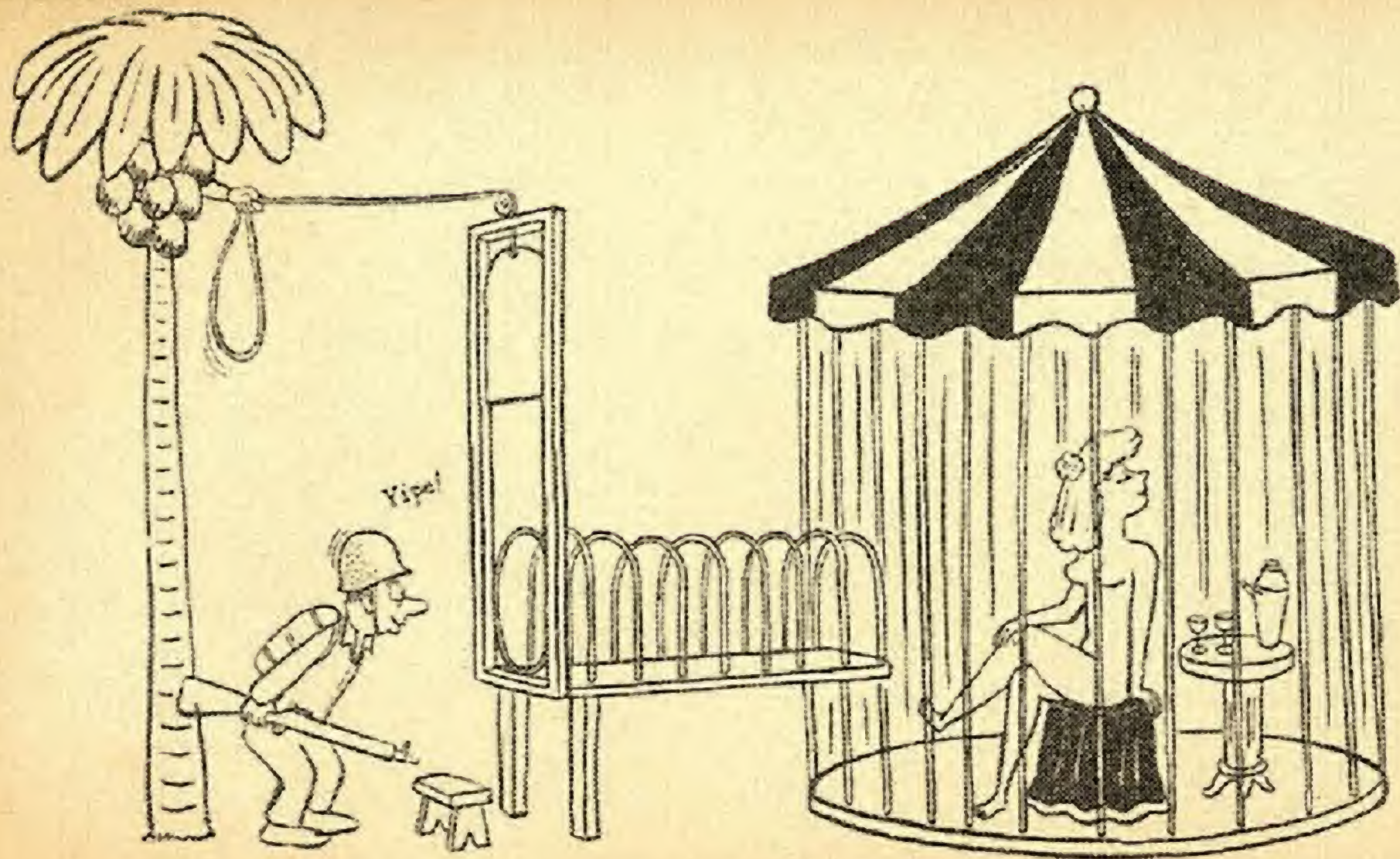
Flares, wire, booby traps, patrols, warning devices, and alert sentries will keep down infiltration to a minimum. The Japs who do manage to infiltrate can generally be quickly disposed of by air burst artillery, grenades, and small arms fired into the trees and vegetation every morning at first light and as often thereafter as necessary. Organized mopping-up parties equipped with flame throwers, demolitions, and bulldozers take over the job of ferreting out or sealing up the Japs who lie "doggo" in their foxholes, pillboxes, or caves while our assault wave passes through. War dogs are also valuable in this mopping-up phase.

Third, turn the Jap's own tricks against him. Some of the deceptions listed in this chapter involve suicidal risks, but most of them are sound military tactics that will work as well against the Jap as for him. Better, in fact, because the average Jap soldier is a slow thinker and gets rattled when he finds himself in an unforeseen position. When his enemy pulls something that's not in the book, not provided for in his orders, he's sunk.

It's simple as ABC—









## CHAPTER 3. AMBUSHES

Jap ambushes may be expected on a large scale wherever the country offers cover. Their ambushes vary from traps laid for individual soldiers to elaborate positions designed to wipe out an entire column. They are most often directed against small patrols moving along a trail or dry stream bed, or against small motorized columns on a road. The ambush may be carried out by a group of snipers, a combat patrol, or by a specially designated ambush party. Or in the case of an individual ambush, a single sniper may carry it out.

Jap tactical ambushes, directed against an entire patrol or column, are on the whole not much different from our own. But their individual, hit-and-run ambushes usually have that special Jap odor.

### HIT-AND-RUN AMBUSHES

Jap individual ambushes are based on luring one or more of our troops into a position where one or more Japs can pick them off with rifle or automatic-weapon fire.

The Japs use a wide variety of bait. A Japanese officer's sword near a cave entrance. An anguished voice shouting "Medics!" in English. An empty foxhole that will save a tired Marine the trouble of digging a fresh one. The souvenir sword is, of course, covered by a machine gun inside the cave; the anguished voice is a Jap sniper's; and the Jap who left the foxhole empty has a bead drawn on it from another, better-hidden foxhole.

The bait for other traps is higher quality. In Bougainville, the Japs would make single cloven-sandal tracks in the soft earth. American soldiers would follow the trail expecting to find one Jap. Instead, they would walk into concentrated gunfire. In the same area, the Japs built small cooking fires to lead our patrols to believe they could surprise the enemy preparing a meal. Creeping up, the patrols were ambushed by Japs waiting along the trail.

In New Guinea, the bait was strictly Jap. They would place a captured, wounded Allied soldier near a trail or





perimeter, covered by machine guns, and torture him until he screamed for help. Or they dragged a dead Allied soldier close to our lines and propped him up, covered by riflemen, expecting that a detail would be sent out to rescue him.

A variation of the first of those tricks was reported from another operation. Sandwiching in a few words of English occasionally, the Japs screamed and yelled to give the impression that U. S. soldiers were being tortured, hoping to attract our troops to the scene and ambush them.

A routine trap, encountered in numerous operations, is for Jap infiltrators to cut Allied telephone lines, and lie in wait for the linemen who come out to repair them.

## TACTICAL AMBUSHES

Jap tactical ambushes are sometimes based on a trick such as those listed above, sometimes depend exclusively on concealment.

Here is a typical example of the first sort, reported by a U. S. parachute regiment on Noemfoor Island:

An American patrol—a reinforced platoon—had advanced about 2,000 yards through the jungle when it met three unarmed enemy who indicated a desire to



surrender. When the get-away man of the patrol took cover, the Japs ran into the bush, whereupon the patrol leader immediately became suspicious. He sent a reconnaissance party about 75 yards to the front. This party ran into Nambu machine-gun and rifle fire. At the same time the rear of the column was fired on by heavy machine guns and riflemen.

The patrol was thrown into all-around defense and ordered to dig in. The Japs kept up heavy intermittent but ineffective fire from 1700 to about 2000.

At about 2000 they started dropping grenades and more fire into the area and kept it up until midnight. During the night they tried to infiltrate the position without success. At daybreak they withdrew, firing several machine-gun bursts to cover their withdrawal.

The patrol leader estimated that he had been surrounded by about 100 Japs. Their fire was on a fixed line, indicating preestablished positions; but fortunately it was too high to be effective. Twenty-one Japs were killed in the action, against two of our troops killed and one wounded, all in the initial phase. The proportion would have been considerably different if the patrol leader hadn't been on his toes.





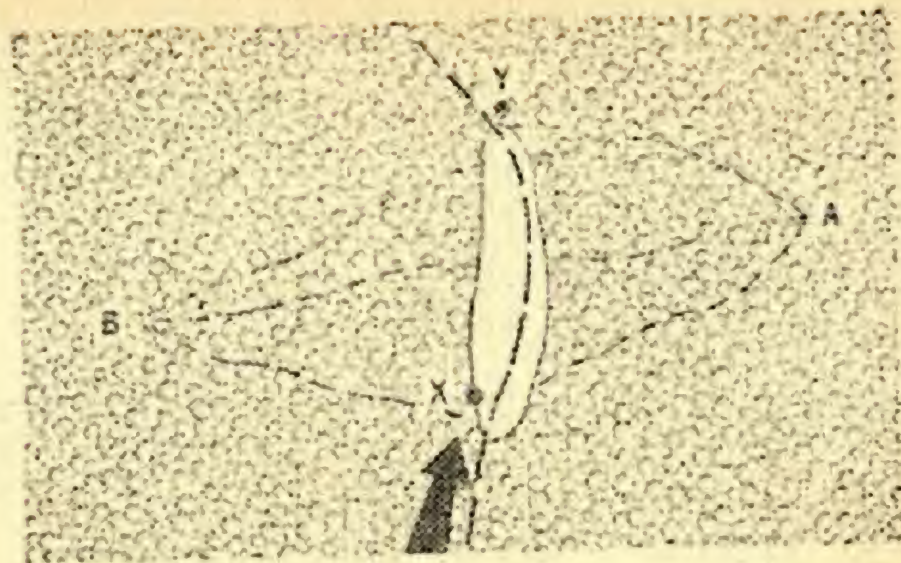
## AMBUSH ALONG A TRAIL

A more elaborate Jap ambush, depending entirely on concealment and aimed at annihilating an entire Allied column, was reported from Burma.

A company of Allied troops was pursuing a Japanese force along a trail, moving in the direction indicated by the arrow in the sketch on this page. The company had an advance guard and was in conventional approach march formation.

Between X and Y the trail ran comparatively straight for about 150 yards, following an old stream bed that formed a clearing about 60 feet wide. The advance guard carefully examined the edges of the clearing for signs of a Jap ambush and found none. The main body was ordered to move on.

What the advance guard failed to discover was that the Japs had built platforms in the trees at X and Y, and had placed two light machine guns in each tree, sited to take the trail under crossfire. These platforms, about 25 feet from the ground, were carefully camouflaged and were practically invisible from below. The advance guard had also failed to notice, or if they did, they paid no attention to a number of old game trails that led out



from the clearing to converge at points A and B, where the Japs had established rendezvous points for ambush parties.

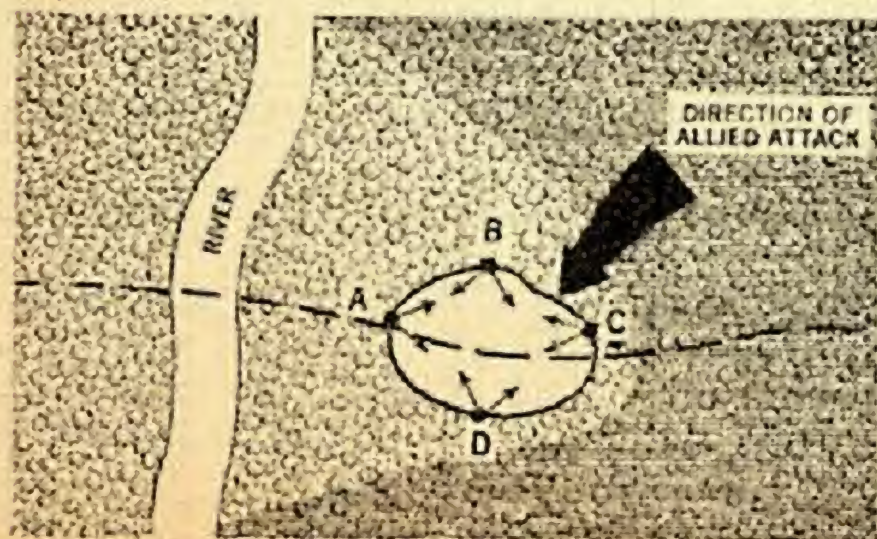
As soon as the advance guard had moved past point Y, the Jap ambush parties at A and B quickly moved in and stationed themselves along the edges of the clearing.

As the head of the main body reached Y, the tail was approaching X. At this point, the four Jap machine guns opened fire. Taken by surprise, the Allied troops



immediately headed for the cover of the jungle, but here they were met by the ambush parties. The casualties of this second phase were all severely slashed on the arms and shoulders, indicating that the Jap ambush parties either didn't carry rifles or preferred the silence of knives. The total casualties were about 40 percent of the company, and included the company commander. In the confusion following the attack the entire Jap party succeeded in escaping.

Precisely the same type of ambush was employed against a column in the Wingate expedition.



## AMBUSH AT A PADDY FIELD

The sketch on this page shows an Allied position in Burma which had been stalemated for some time. The fighting was taking place along the one trail leading down the valley. The location was particularly important since it controlled the only ford across the river and neither side had any bridge-building equipment. The Allies had probed the defense and concluded that the weakest part of the position was that in front of the small paddy field. They planned a two-platoon attack. While one platoon made a holding attack in front of D, the other platoon was to break through between B and C, as indicated by the arrow.

The attack was launched as planned. But the Japs, anticipating the time and direction of the attack, had evacuated their positions. Encountering no opposition, the Allied platoon burst into the clearing and headed for the opposite side to flank the enemy at D. When they were well into the clearing, enemy machine guns located in trees at A, B, C, and D opened up and caught the attackers in a deadly crossfire. Only 14 men escaped. The other 18, including the platoon leader, were killed.







## CHAPTER 4. SNIPERS

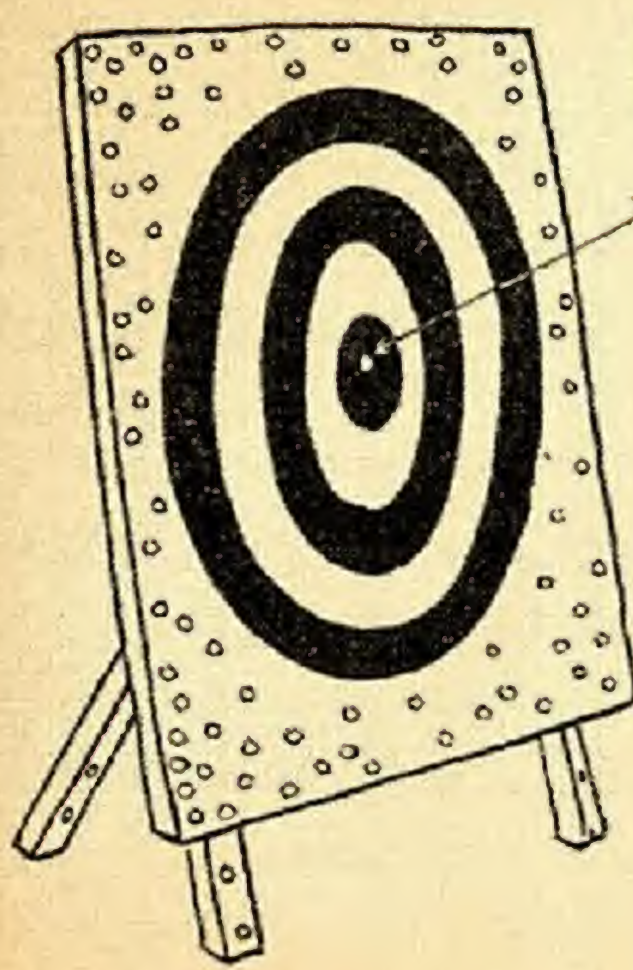
The role of sniper particularly suits the mentality of the Jap soldier. It builds up his individual importance, gives him a chance to show off his courage, skill, endurance, and cunning. And he can claim full credit for his exploits—among his fellows, if he happens to survive; among his ancestors if he doesn't.

The patience of Jap snipers is proverbial. Numerous instances have been reported where snipers have crouched or lain in one position for as long as three days just to fire one shot—undoubtedly realizing that they would be killed immediately afterwards. They will stand for hours in rice fields, up to their necks in water. At Milne Bay a Jap sniper camouflaged as a tropical bush crouched on the edge of an Australian jungle outpost for two days without moving, to learn the names and habits of the men in the detachment. Finally he called out in a perfect Australian accent, "Say, Bill, where are you? This is Alf." When Bill showed himself, the bush suddenly arose and shot him dead, then dropped back into the foliage. The sniper was wounded only after the area had been completely raked with machine-gun fire.

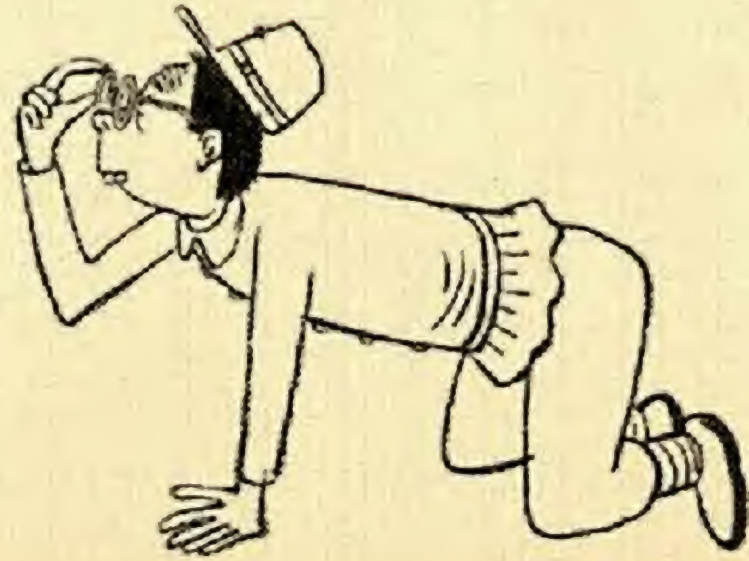




The marksmanship of Jap snipers is so-so. During the early years of the war there was a tendency to exaggerate the deadly accuracy and abundance of Jap snipers. Then our troops gradually learned that only a few of the Japs who sniped at them were trained marksmen. The others were apparently chosen for their expendability rather than their ability. In this chapter the term



BUT THIS  
ONE MIGHT  
BE AIMED AT  
YOU!





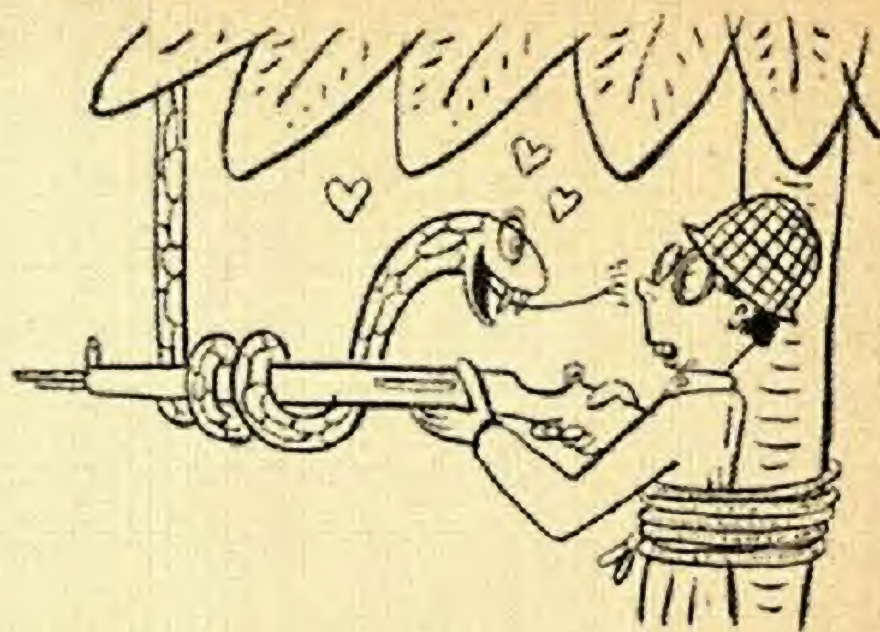
"sniper" is used in its broadest sense of a soldier who snipes, rather than a soldier who is specially trained and equipped to deliver accurate fire at mid ranges and above.

As for the patience of the Jap sniper, one thing to notice about the Milne Bay incident given above is that there was a good deal of stupidity mixed in with the patience of the sniper who played bush for two days for a single shot. Granted that he had it figured that Bill was a key man, he could have done much more damage in 30 seconds with a hand grenade. Or if he didn't have a grenade, he surely should have managed, given two full days, to trade more than one life for his own.

Jap snipers are patient, yes, and good at concealment, camouflage, cover, and selection of position. Their fire discipline is excellent. But they have nothing that routine alertness, plus observation of the same military virtues, plus our own better shooting and thinking, can't easily beat.

## HOW

The Japs use snipers both offensively and defensively. On offensive assignments, Jap snipers infiltrate within the enemy lines—or are left behind in a withdrawal—to pick off officers or gun crews, to create confusion and



harassment, or to stage a demonstration at the time of the main frontal attack that will make their enemy believe he's surrounded. Jap snipers also attack advance units or patrols, preferably from the rear. They cover breaks in our telephone or telegraph lines. They play a key part in almost every type of Jap ambush or small-unit raid.

Used defensively, whenever possible Jap snipers are made a definite part of the Japanese defensive system. They cover small advanced positions; lines of approach



to the main positions; pillboxes, road blocks and obstacles, gun positions, and other installations; the flanks of defense areas; roads or trails in their own and our areas.

Snipers may also be used to gather information, in which case they avoid firing unless discovered, remaining for long periods to observe troop movements and dispositions.

Another duty of snipers is to spot enemy snipers, and they are urged to bring back enemy prisoners.



Very rarely, Jap snipers work singly. More often they operate in pairs, each covering the other; or in parties of three to half a dozen or more.

## WHERE

A favorite post for a Jap sniper is a tree. A tree gives good observation and good concealment; the enemy can't come close enough to use a bayonet or a knife; men driving past in open-topped trucks or carriers are sitting pigeons.

However, on Leyte Jap snipers preferred to operate on the ground, in groups of three or four. In Burma, they favored small pits dug under fallen trees, or positions under the spreading roots of tropical trees.

Where caves have been available, Jap snipers have made full use of them. Also rocks, bushes, underbrush, logs, stumps, hedgerows, fallen palm leaves, ravines, and any other available natural cover.

Where natural cover is not available, they hide themselves in pillboxes or foxholes, or under a camouflaged shelter half. Three days after our first landings on Kwajalein, Jap soldiers were still sniping from foxholes covered with a natural camouflage of palm fronds to blend with the surrounding terrain. Other enemy sol-



*Rubbish heaps  
are favorite hiding  
spots.*



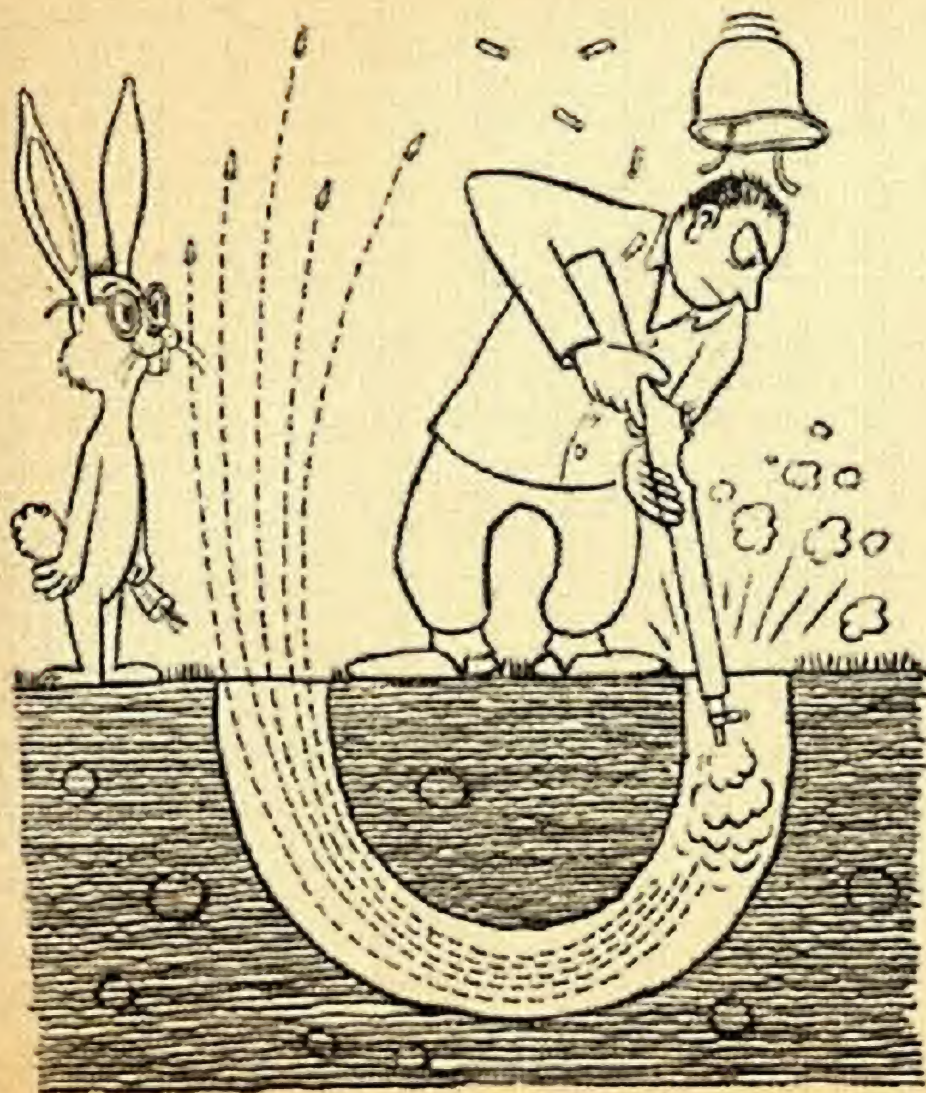
liers lay in full view among the bodies of Jap dead. One sniper infiltrated behind our lines during the night and hid himself in a rubbish heap. He allowed U. S. soldiers to go by and then fired on them from the rear. When he was discovered, he didn't give up until gasoline had been poured on the rubbish pile and set afire.

On Guadalcanal, snipers were buried in the ground, with slits just large enough for peep holes and the muzzles of their rifles. These positions were dug to face the rear of our troops after they had passed by.

Men who fought at New Britain reported that Jap snipers were seldom in the places where they might have been expected. If our troops were advancing along a hillside, the snipers usually were on the low side and fired into our men from trees on the level rather than from above. On Iwo Jima, enemy snipers hid themselves under our dead during daylight hours and came out to fire at night. Some of the Jap snipers wore Marine uniforms.

In village fighting, the Japs use houses or native huts





for cover—but try to pick the least likely ones, and are more apt to be underneath than inside.

Whenever possible, a Jap sniper in a covered position tries to provide himself with an equally well-covered escape route. Jap pillboxes, particularly in areas well fortified before our arrival, have numerous hidden escape trenches, and their caves have multiple exits.

Preferably, Jap snipers choose posts with good observation—at the turn of a trail or the turn of a dry stream bed, or the head of a ravine. But it isn't safe to count on this. A Jap sniper may post himself where he can see only a few square feet, and wait for days until an enemy crosses his narrow field of fire.

A Jap sniper operating from a tree often ties himself in position so he can handle his weapon freely, and so his body won't fall when shot but will continue to attract fire. He also will tie his weapon to the tree to avoid dropping it carelessly or if wounded. Machine guns in particular are securely lashed to the tree, and relief men are ready to take the place of snipers who are shot.

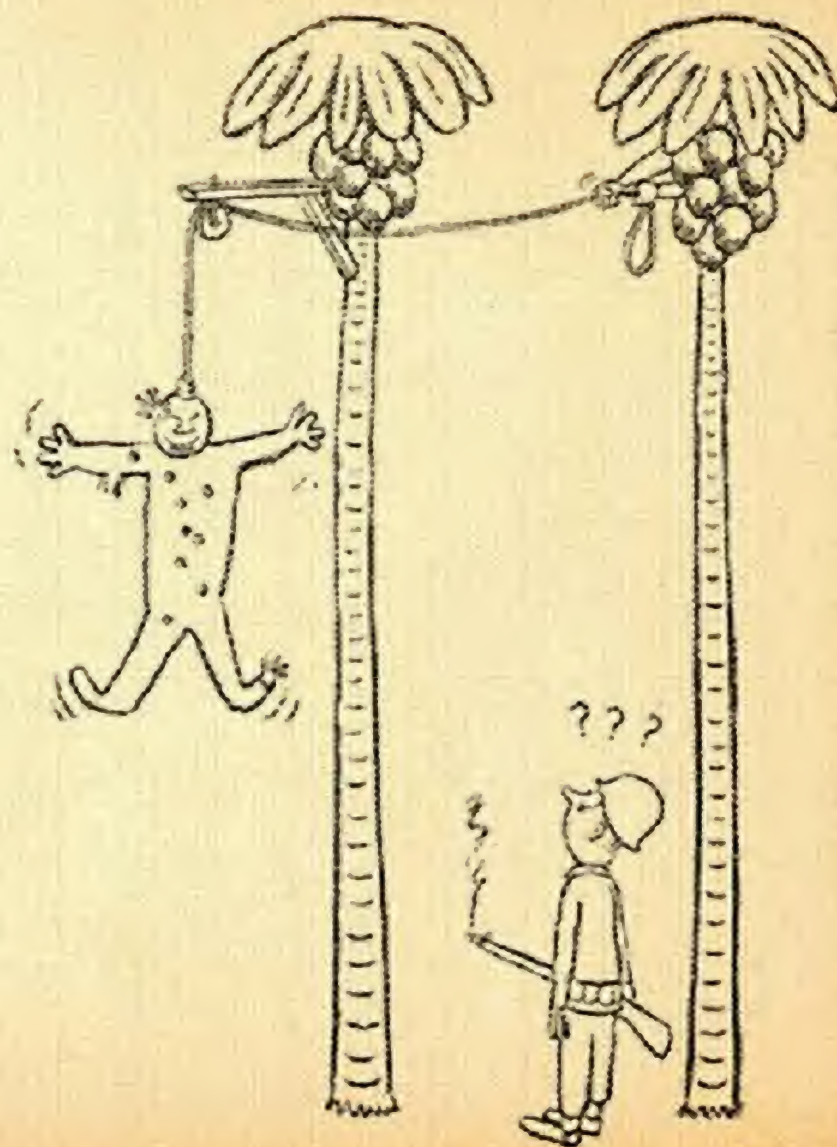
Sometimes the Japs install dummy snipers in trees. In New Guinea, an Allied patrol advancing up the coast was fired on by a sniper in a tall tree. The patrol halted,



located the sniper, and apparently shot him down. Continuing their advance, they were fired on again. This happened several times. The patrol finally discovered that a single sniper was holding them up. The snipers shot down were dummies, dropped by a pulley arrangement after the patrol had fired a number of shots. In another case reported, the sniper's dummy was rigged so that it could be pulled back into place. The sniper made the mistake of pulling it back too soon, giving away the trick.

Another time, a Jap sniper in a tree dropped a dummy rifle after he had been fired on. When the Allied soldier went up to investigate the kill, the Jap opened fire at close range.

During the Makin operation, Jap snipers worked their way by night into tree positions close to one of our company perimeters: from their trees they expected to be able to look down into foxholes. But the foxholes were too well camouflaged. About dawn, the snipers dropped firecrackers to the ground. The sound resembled Jap rifle fire, and several of our men revealed their positions by shooting at random, and were at once fired on by the snipers. Thereafter men listened for the hiss that comes before the explosion of a firecracker.





## WHO

Jap snipers choose their targets with considerable care. An officer or squad leader is of course considered good pickings. Where these take the precaution of removing



their insignia, the sniper watches to see who is giving orders or hand signals, or carrying a pistol; or he listens to the way our men address one another. Radiomen are also favored targets, and gun crews. On Saipan and in parts of the Philippines, Jap snipers paid particular attention to American litter bearers and aid men.

On Leyte, where Jap snipers tended to operate in nests of three or four, on the ground, the snipers seldom fired at vehicles moving along roads no matter how loaded with troops they might be. They did, however, fire continually at foot troops on roads, individuals as well as formations. When firing at a single man, only one sniper would shoot so as not to disclose the sniper positions any more than necessary.

Snipers along a road or trail or in the path of an Allied advance usually let the advance elements—or, if it's a small force, the entire force—pass by so that they can operate from their favorite position, the rear. After firing, the snipers usually quickly move to another position.

If their aim is to cover a withdrawal, they may adopt a somewhat different tactic. When the advance guard of their enemy reaches the sniper screen, the snipers fire enough rounds to halt the guard, then slip out of their



troops, retire 100 yards to a new position, fire again, and repeat until they have fallen back to the main defensive position. This was a usual Jap withdrawal tactic in Central Burma, with outposts being substituted for sniper screens in some cases.

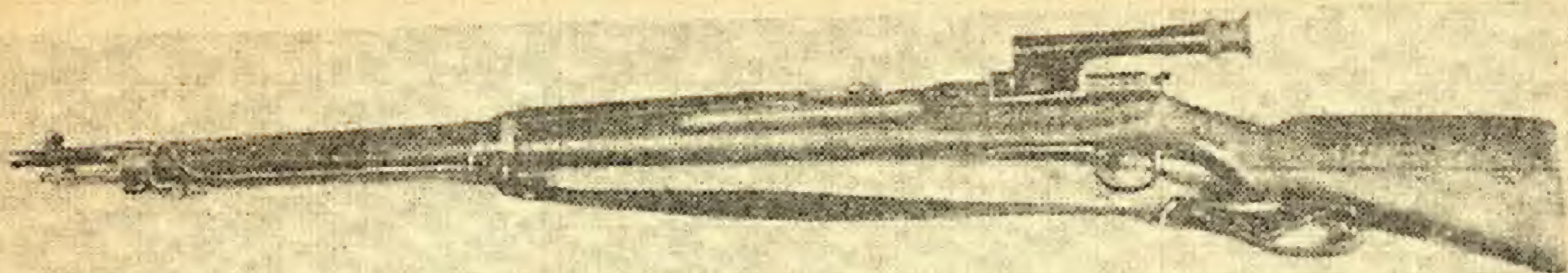
To vary the procedure and keep their enemy guessing, the Japs sometimes did this: Instead of meeting the Allied column with fire from outposts or snipers, the rear-guard force in the main position would be the first to give combat. Then, as the action developed, they would send out groups of three or four snipers to harass the flanks and rear of the attackers. When the Jap rear guard abandoned a delaying position the move was made at night, usually starting about an hour after sunset. Most of the time the Japs were quite noisy during their preparations for withdrawal. But they would leave a light machine gunner or a sniper in position until first light. He would fire an occasional burst to give the impression that the position was still occupied.

Generally speaking, Jap snipers won't fire on a single man unless he happens to be a key man—an officer or non-com or radioman or a scout who they suspect is taking back important information. They prefer to wait for a chance to fire on a number of men from the rear while

maintaining good personal security. Much has been said and written about the suicide mania of the Japanese. But most Japs prefer to stay alive. And Jap commanders prefer not to waste their trained marksmen needlessly.





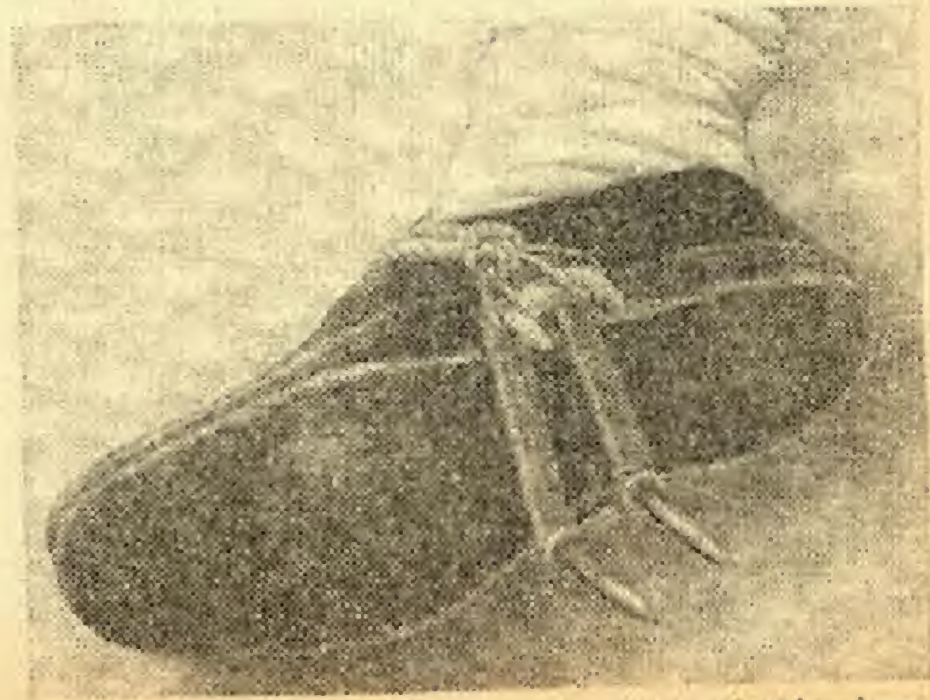


*A small percentage of Jap snipers are equipped with this Type 97 (1937) 6.5-mm special sniper's rifle.*

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The Japs have designed a special rifle for their snipers. The Type 97 (1937) 6.5-mm sniper's rifle was developed from the standard Type 38 (1905) 6.5-mm rifle. The special features of the sniper's rifle are a telescopic sight and a folding monopod. To accommodate the telescopic sight, a sight-mounting bracket is bolted to the left side of the receiver and the bolt handle has been lengthened and bent downward to clear the sight.

Snipers not provided with this rifle use the standard Jap 6.5- or 7.7-mm rifles, or captured Allied rifles. The Japs, moreover, don't always follow the book-rule that a sniper must be a rifleman. In place of a rifle, their snipers may be armed with automatic weapons. They often carry grenades as well as small arms; a favorite



*Jap tree snipers sometimes wear these light climbing irons.*



truck is to lob these from the roadside into passing ammunition carriers or trucks.

Snipers who operate in trees appear to prefer the leather shoe, as the common rubber-soled, split-toe shoe, or "tabi", doesn't give a good footing for climbing. Tree snipers may be equipped with light climbing irons, and almost always are carefully camouflaged by the various means discussed in the next chapter.

## POSTSCRIPT

To sum up, here's the score on the Jap sniper:

At fire discipline, he rates an unqualified superior. His concealment and patience are also superior, with this qualification: he's inclined to run these virtues into the ground—to sacrifice field of fire for the sake of better concealment, and to spend 24 hours doing a 15-minute job.

His mentality is only fair, and his marksmanship, except in isolated cases, can't touch that of our own snipers. In fact, 9 out of 10 Jap snipers are snipers only by virtue of their concealed positions. They've received no special training in marksmanship, and are armed with the weapons of the run-of-the-mill infantryman. Their effectiveness is slight at long ranges. Their effectiveness at

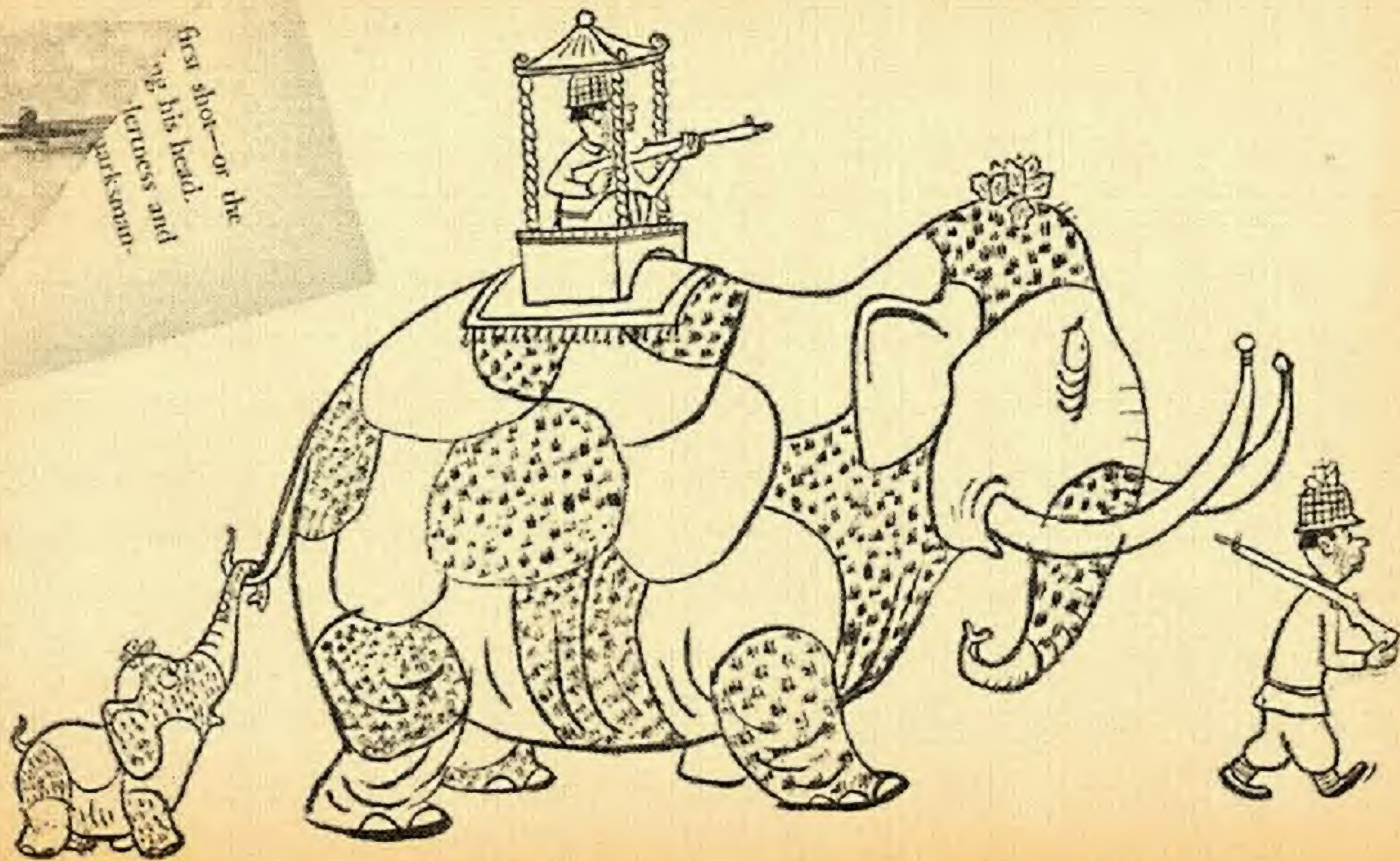
close ranges depends on getting in the first shot—or the first three or four. Or on their enemy losing his head.

Our own strict fire discipline, our own alertness and routine security measures, and our own better marksmanship can easily cancel out that effectiveness.





first shot—or the  
of his head.  
terness and  
darkness.





## CHAPTER 5. CAMOUFLAGE AND DUMMY INSTALLATIONS

In at least one aspect of military operations the Japs must be granted a well-earned excellent. This is in the matter of camouflage and deception. Although cases can be found where the Japs used poor camouflage or none at all, generally speaking they have been unusually good at concealing men, weapons, and emplacements.

The individual Jap soldier is well trained in the value of concealment. He uses camouflage not only on his person, but on his weapons, emplacements, installations, and vehicles of all kinds. He sometimes carries camouflage to amazing lengths, with great attention to detail. A report from Burma claimed that even the elephants the Jap Army was using were camouflaged. The hides of the animals were painted in large patches of different shades of green to match the colors of the jungle.

The deception created by Jap camouflage is frequently increased by dummy weapons, sited to draw attention from real installations, and by firm fire discipline, maintained to prevent an early give-away of the positions of weapons.

### INDIVIDUAL CAMOUFLAGE

The Jap has done some of his best work in camouflage on his own person. He makes every effort to blend himself into the background and usually begins by digging in. Then he covers himself and his foxhole with vegetation matching the surroundings.

The Japs place heavy emphasis on the use of grass, bushes, tree branches or leaves, and all other natural materials. In addition the Jap soldier is issued camouflage aids. Individual helmet- and body-camouflage nets are provided into which the Japs weave grass or strips of palm fronds. In place of these, rows of light cord may be sewn across the uniform to provide means of holding natural camouflage. Sometimes Jap riflemen and observers use the hooded antigas cape made of light, water-repellent tan paper.

Japs fighting above the snow line on Attu Island in the Aleutians wore white snow parkas. When they moved across the grass of the lower hillsides, they often



crouched with strips of green matting held in front of them. On other occasions they have used screens made of bamboo or branches plaited together with rope or wire. These screens, generally covered with grass and nets, may be either portable or stationary. The stationary screens are used for concealing positions, installations, or matériel; the portable screens commonly hide personnel.

Jap snipers camouflage themselves with special care. The sniper is given a thorough course in individual camouflage before he enters combat. He's taught that

the camouflage of the upper half of the body is particularly important. For this he's trained to use helmet and body nets, striped in various colors, which he decorates with dyed straw issued with the nets or with foliage of his own choosing.

Like the chameleon, the Jap sniper varies his protective coloration according to his immediate surroundings. Snipers in jungle areas often paint their faces and hands green and cover their clothes with leafy branches. One tree sniper, examined after he was shot down, carried a green net for his helmet, a pair of long green gloves, and a bottle of green liquid for smearing his face and rifle. Snipers in coconut palms sometimes string coconuts around their necks.

Another covering Jap snipers have used is the camouflage jungle jacket. This is made of palm fronds that cover the body to the knees, with a short cape over the shoulders and upper arms. The green palm fronds dry out and turn brown after a few days but are still useful under favorable color conditions.

Last but far from least of the camouflage means of the individual Jap soldier is his phenomenal capacity for immobility. He has learned well the lesson that movement is more revealing than color.











*Jap troops dressed in grass camouflage.*



## CAMOUFLAGE OF SMALL POSITIONS

On Attu Japs disguised their hillside positions, such as lookouts, with pussy willow branches, draped with tundra moss and tufts of grass. On the Southwest Pacific islands they used bamboo and palm fronds; in Burma, brush and vines. Their careful attention to camouflage has been general, not confined to or even outstanding in one area. They use whatever materials they can get their hands on, and use them well.

On covered positions grass is used to mask the narrow observation and firing slits. The outlines and shadows of small positions are broken up by tufts of grass loosely twisted into ropes. The Japs open the rope strands, as in uplying, place tufts of grass between the strands, fluff them out, then twist the strands of rope back in place. Sometimes they use rice straw instead of grass. At other times they place straw matting over openings and excavations. Carefully done, such methods make a hill known to be occupied by the Japs look completely deserted.

On the beaches of Pacific islands the Japs built rifle pits and machine-gun positions under the shore fringe of coconut trees. The natural screen of low undergrowth in front of the positions was undisturbed.

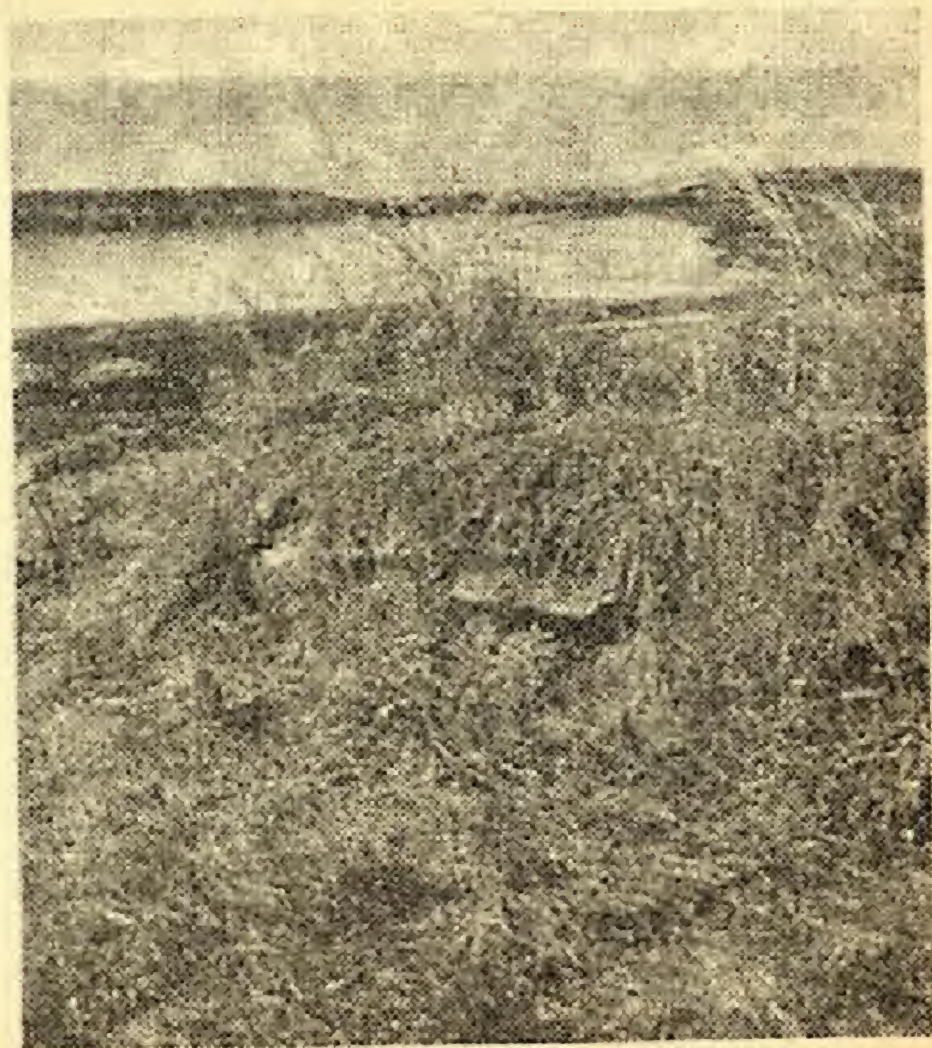


*The Japs hide small rifle and machine-gun positions by covering them with sod, leaving only narrow openings for observation and firing.*



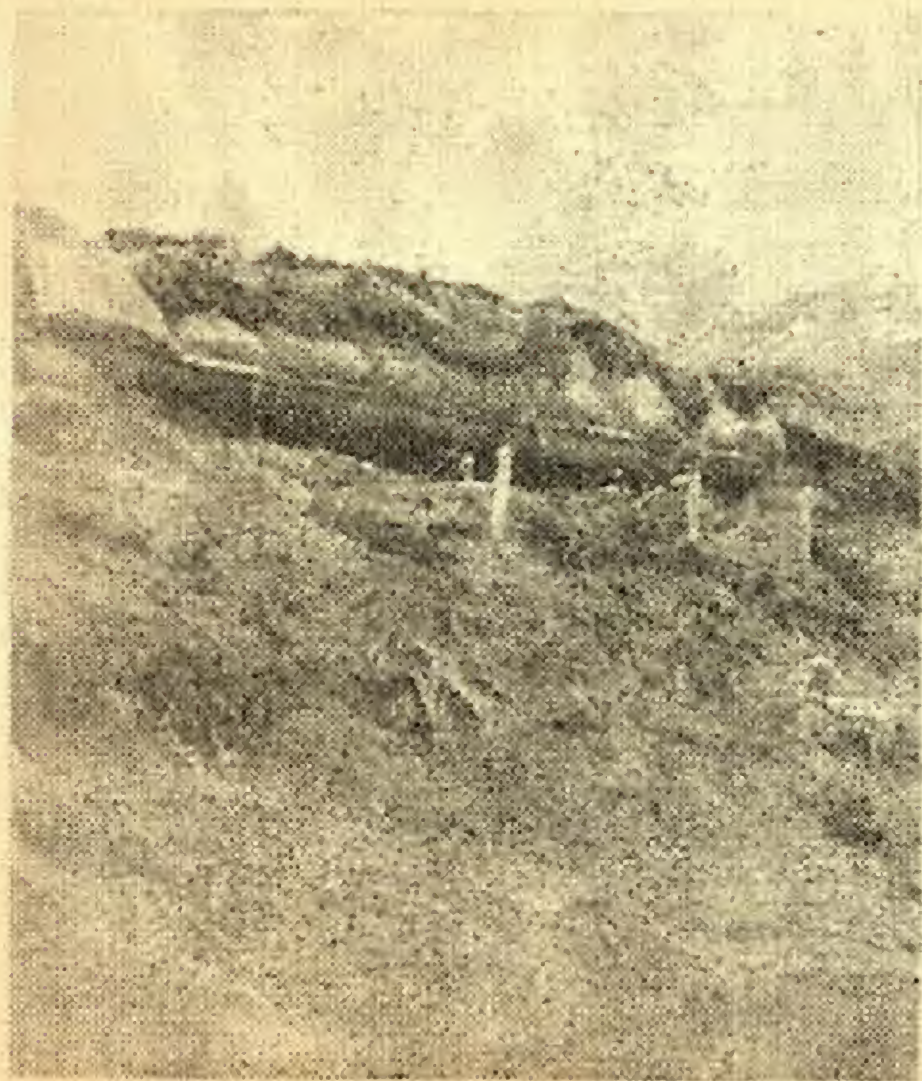


*Building this small log-and-coral pillbox under a tree helped to conceal and disguise it.*

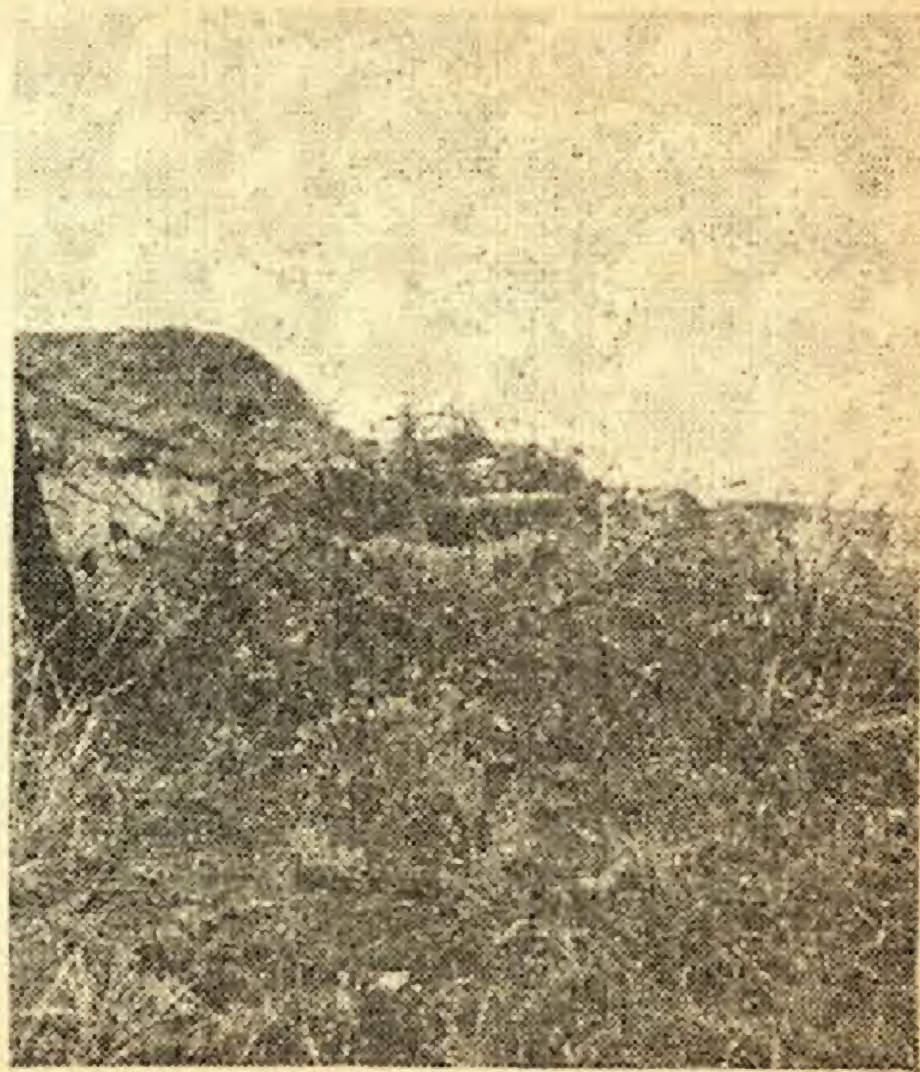


*Natural growth almost completely masks the logs from which this beachside position is built.*





*This pillbox overlooking a beach on Attu is entered by a rear tunnel through the dune.*



*Transplanted vegetation blends into the landscape a well-sited Jap pillbox on Guam.*

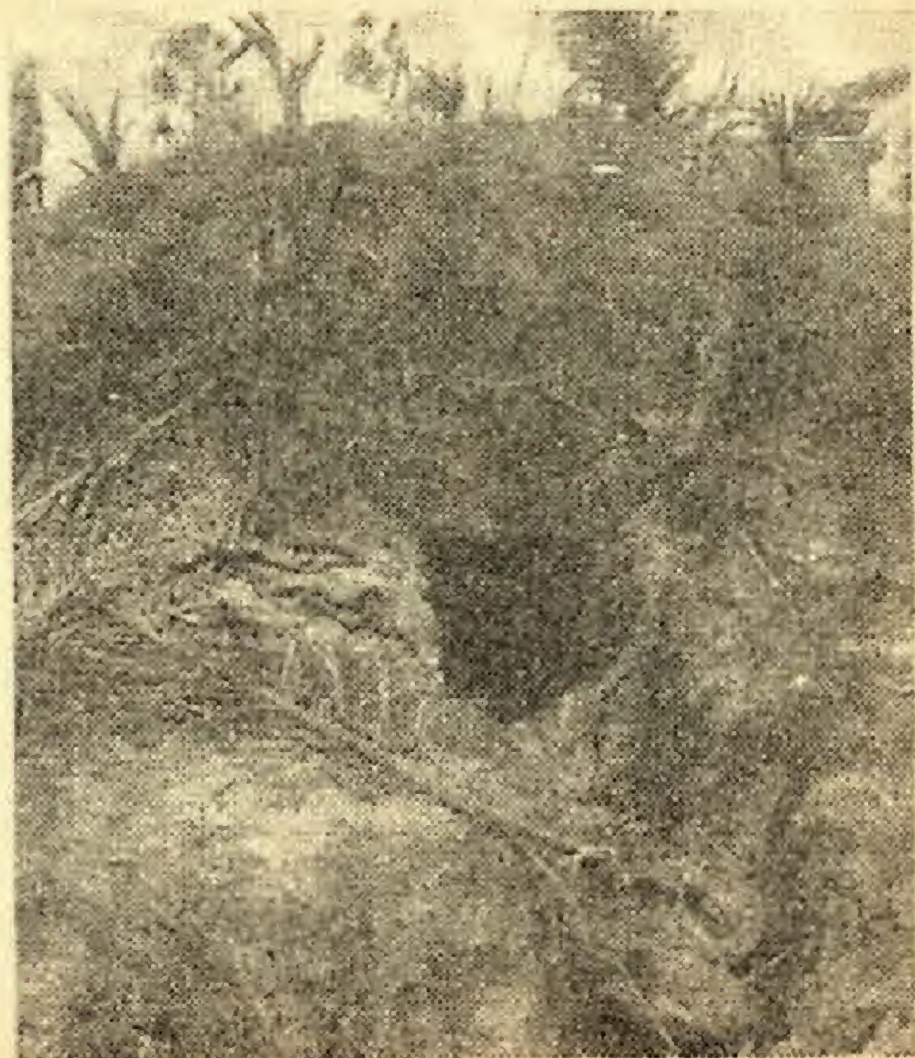


## CAMOUFLAGED FORTIFICATIONS

These careful camouflage techniques have been applied to larger fortified positions as well. On Guam, for example, our men advanced to within 20 to 30 feet of coconut-log pillboxes before they accurately located them.

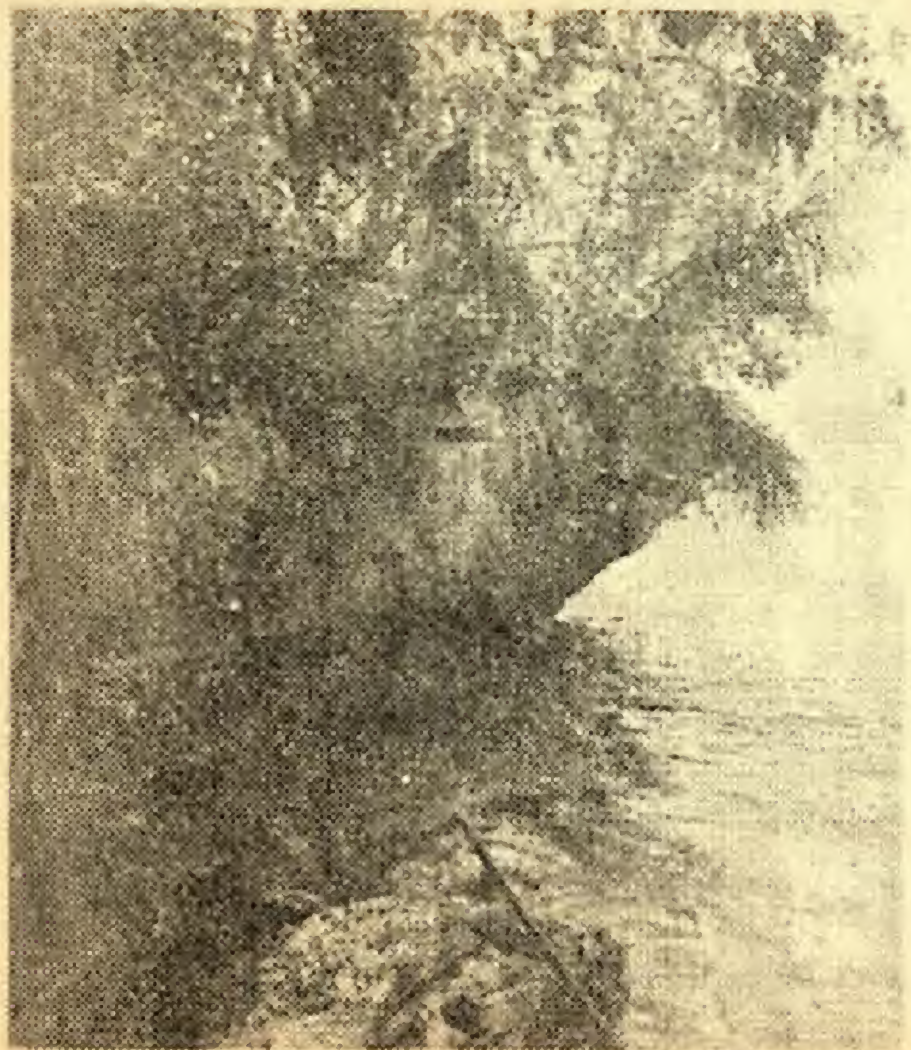
The Japs improve upon natural cover by transplanting. In the Solomon Islands, instead of using sandbags the Japs used bags made from rice straw, filled with dirt. Rice or other seeds were planted on the top sacks and the result was a natural green growth. On Makin, the Japs built a concrete pillbox under a small palm tree and placed turf on top of the position and small pandanus trees around it. Some pillboxes were covered by living vines. In barren rocky areas the rocks themselves are used for camouflage.

The Japs usually take the precaution of digging up sod for covering their positions at some distance from the positions. The sod for some Jap defenses was cut from rectangular areas, apparently with the hope that the contrasting color patches would befuddle our air observers. Similar deceptive techniques have been used in outlining entire false trench systems, where only the surface sod was stripped off to reveal the dark earth.



*Rear entrance of a Peleliu pillbox camouflaged with live sod and jungle plants.*



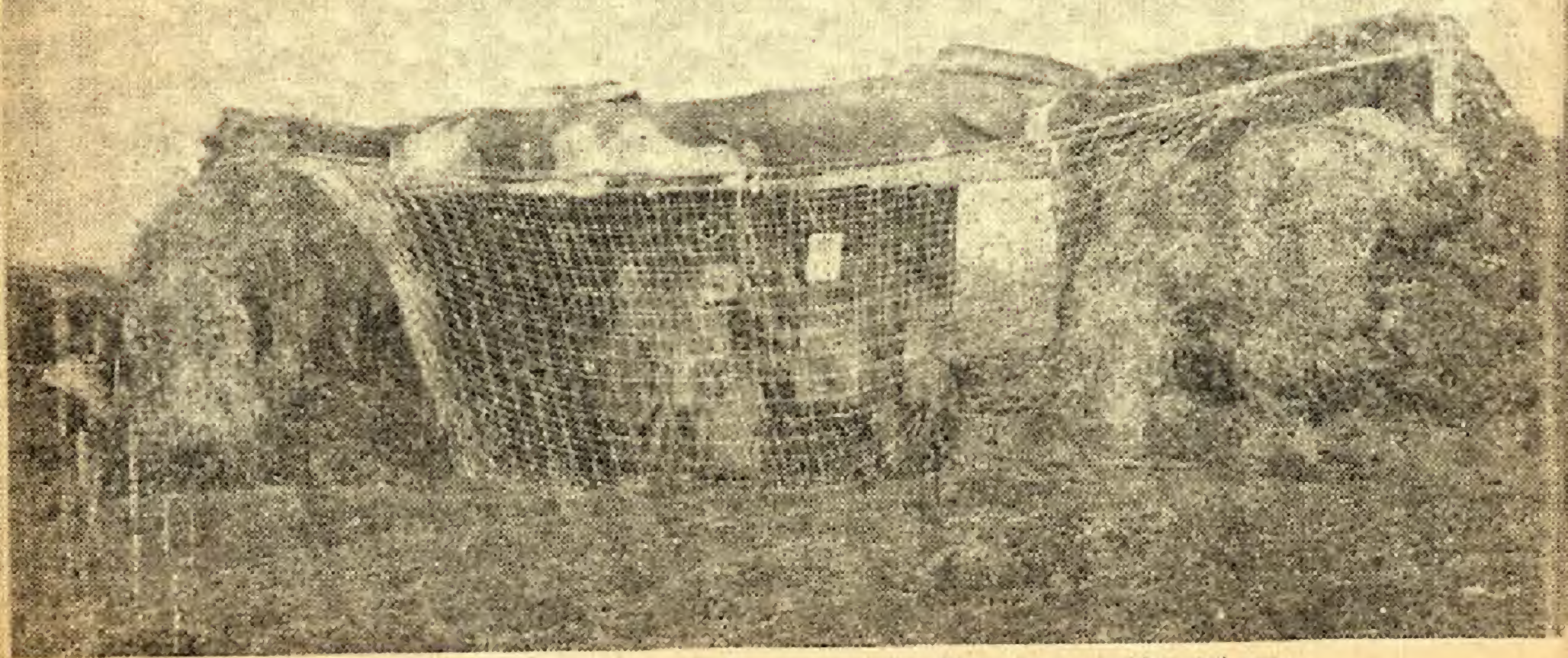


*Only the tiny firing port gives away this cliffside pillbox on Peleliu.*



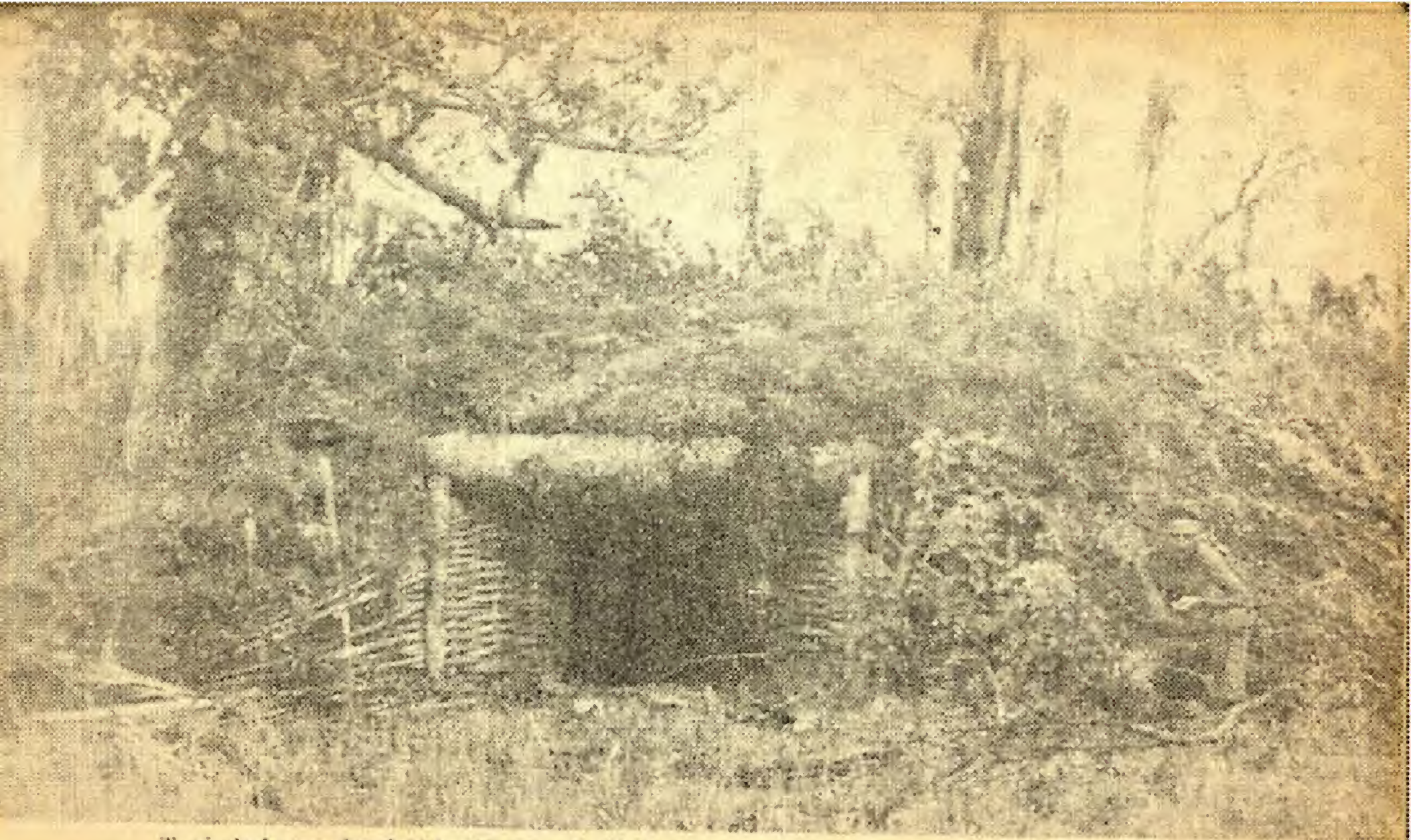
*It looks like an innocent native hut, but it's actually a Jap gun position.*





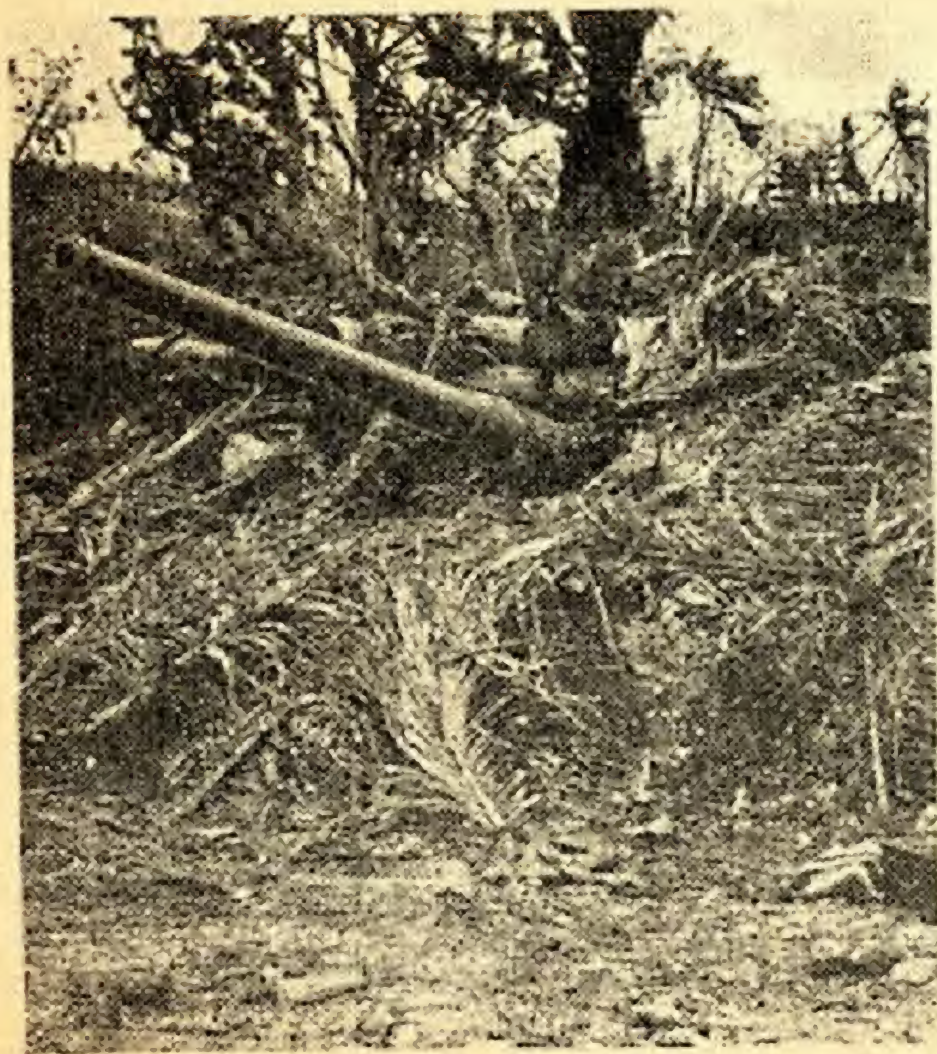
*Natural and artificial camouflage are mixed to hide a 75-mm regimental gun.*





*Typical of many Jap field fortifications is this heavily retted gun position under a large tree.*



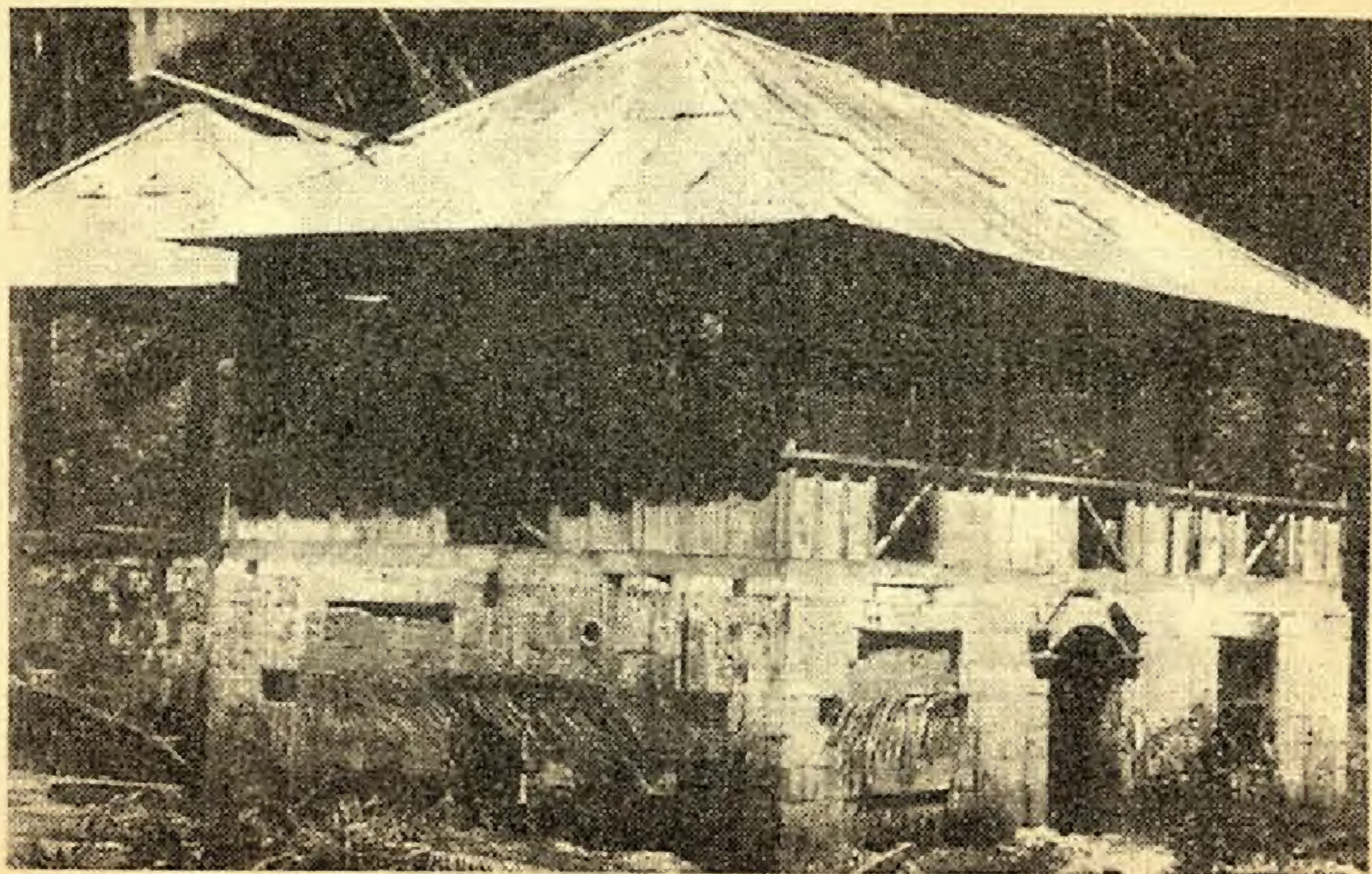


*This Jap gun position on Guam was camouflaged by spreading palm fronds over the dirt revetment.*



*Jap field fortifications usually give the appearance of having been planted rather than constructed.*





*The Japs converted this sawed-stone house on Luzon into a pillbox by blocking windows and cutting firing ports.*



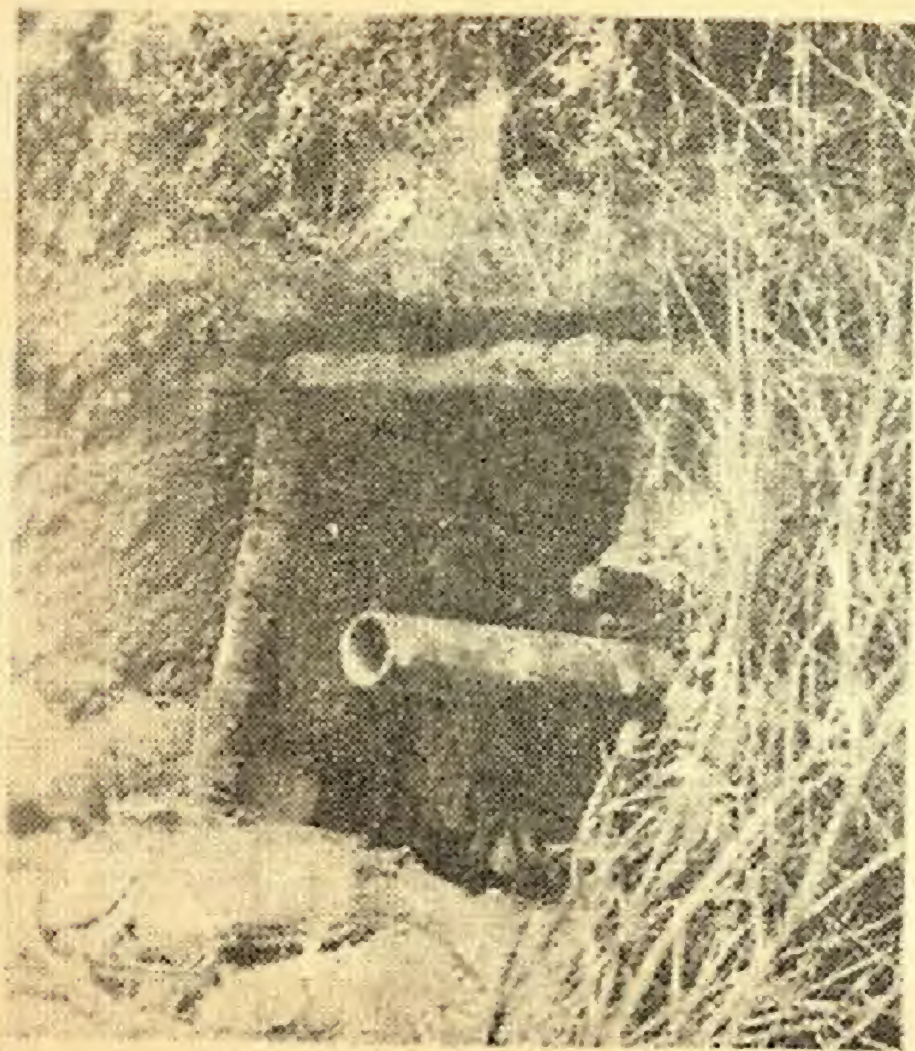


*This Jap 75-mm field piece fired on our troops while half hidden under a native shack on Leyte.*

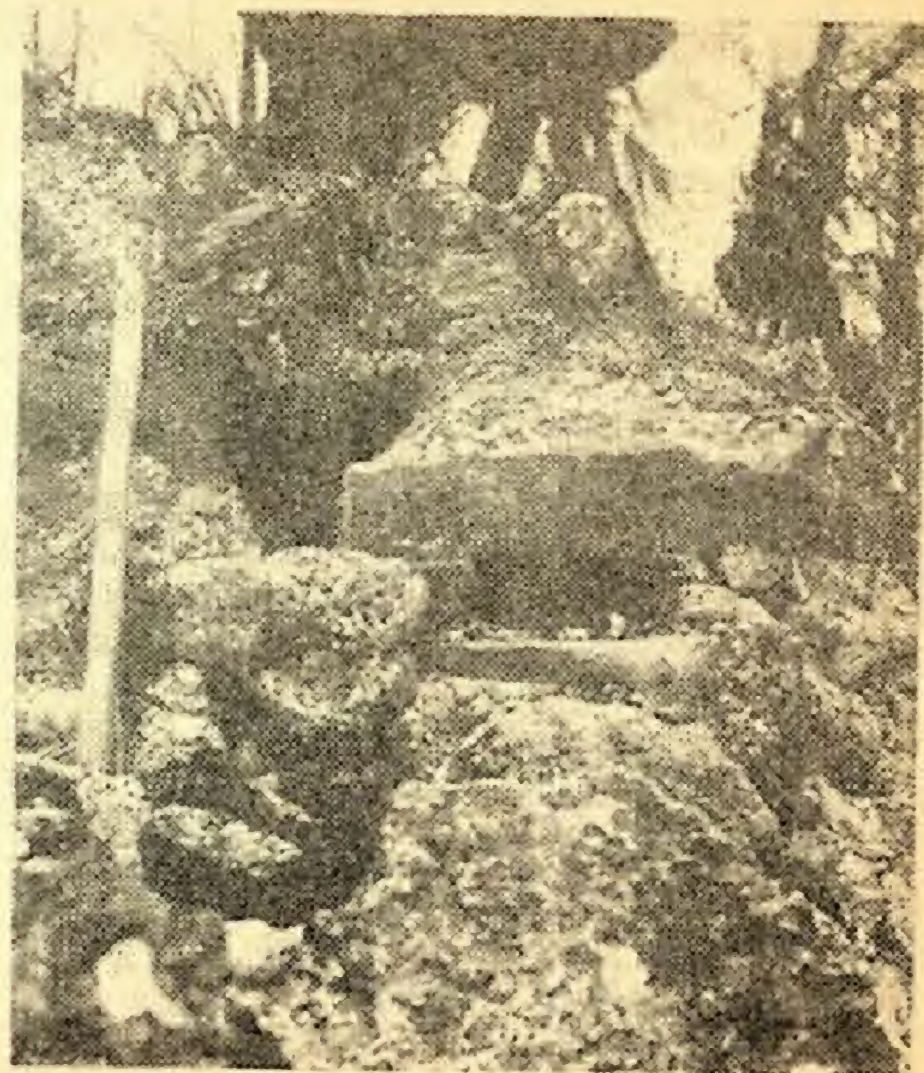


*From 20 yards away, this log-and-coral pillbox on Peleliu is almost impossible to detect.*





*Half of the camouflage has been removed from a cave position for a Jap short 8-inch gun on Saipan.*



*This pillbox, sited to enfilade a beach on Guam, is typical of the Japs' skill in masking cave positions.*



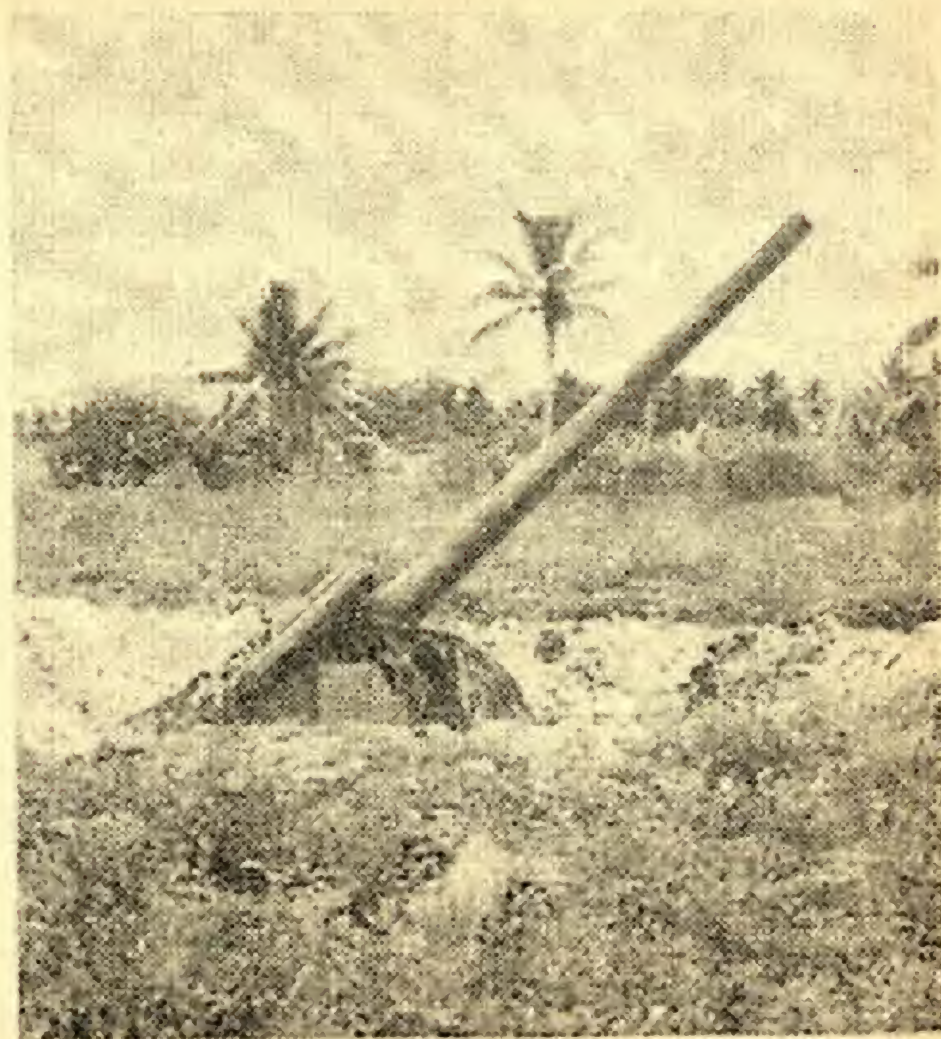
## CAMOUFLAGE OF BUILDINGS

The most usual Jap way of camouflaging buildings is to spread palm fronds on the roof to blend the building with its surroundings or to make it look like a native hut. Or they may use instead nets, tarpaulins, or natural foliage woven into mats. Some new buildings on Jap Pacific bases were built with large breadfruit trees growing through the roofs. Grass and small bushes are often planted on concrete ammunition- or oil-storage buildings to hide them from the air.

Deceptive painting, in various tones of red and gray, also appears on Jap buildings. This may be in the form of stripes, of greatly varying width, painted parallel to the length of the building. Or the paint may be applied in splashes. Many of the Jap heavy guns captured on Pacific islands have been disruptively painted with red, yellow, green, and blue colors.

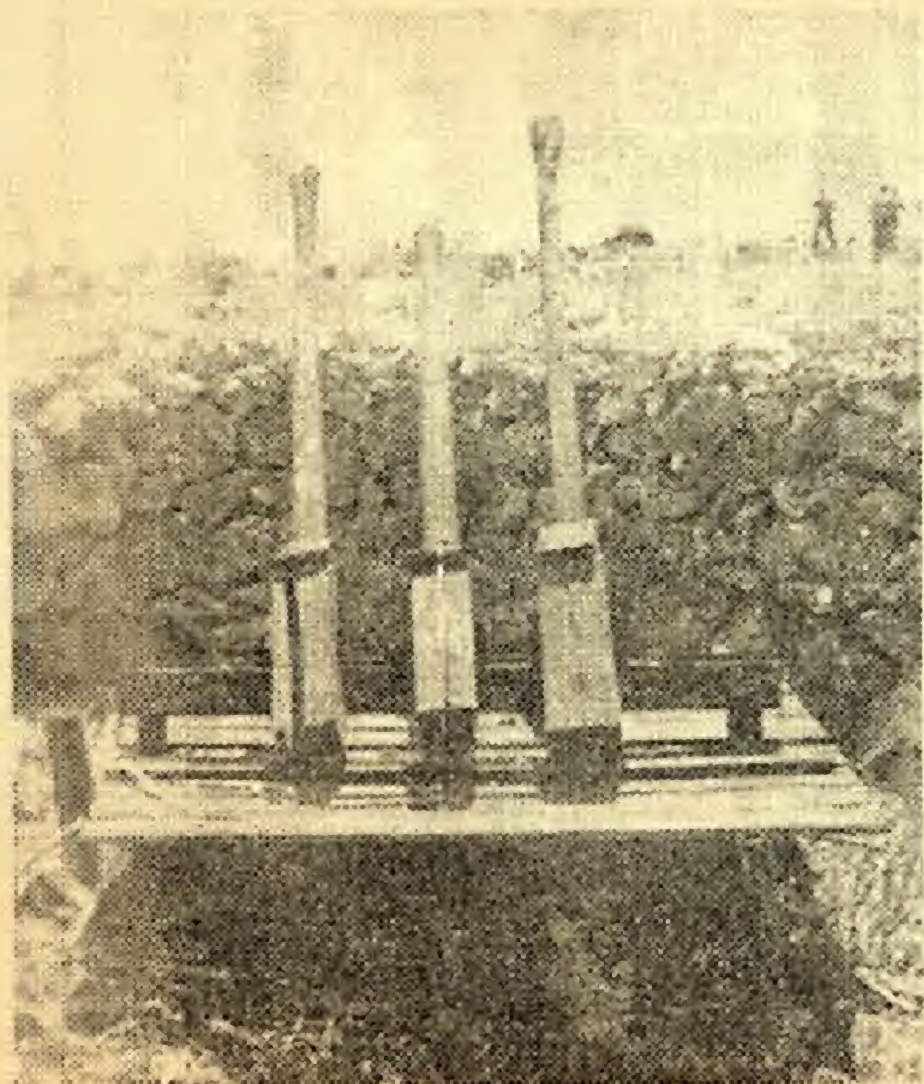
## DUMMY WEAPONS AND POSITIONS

The Japs have shown considerable improvement recently in their construction of dummies. Many of their log guns, wood tanks, and bamboo airplanes have been built in fine detail from materials available on the spot.

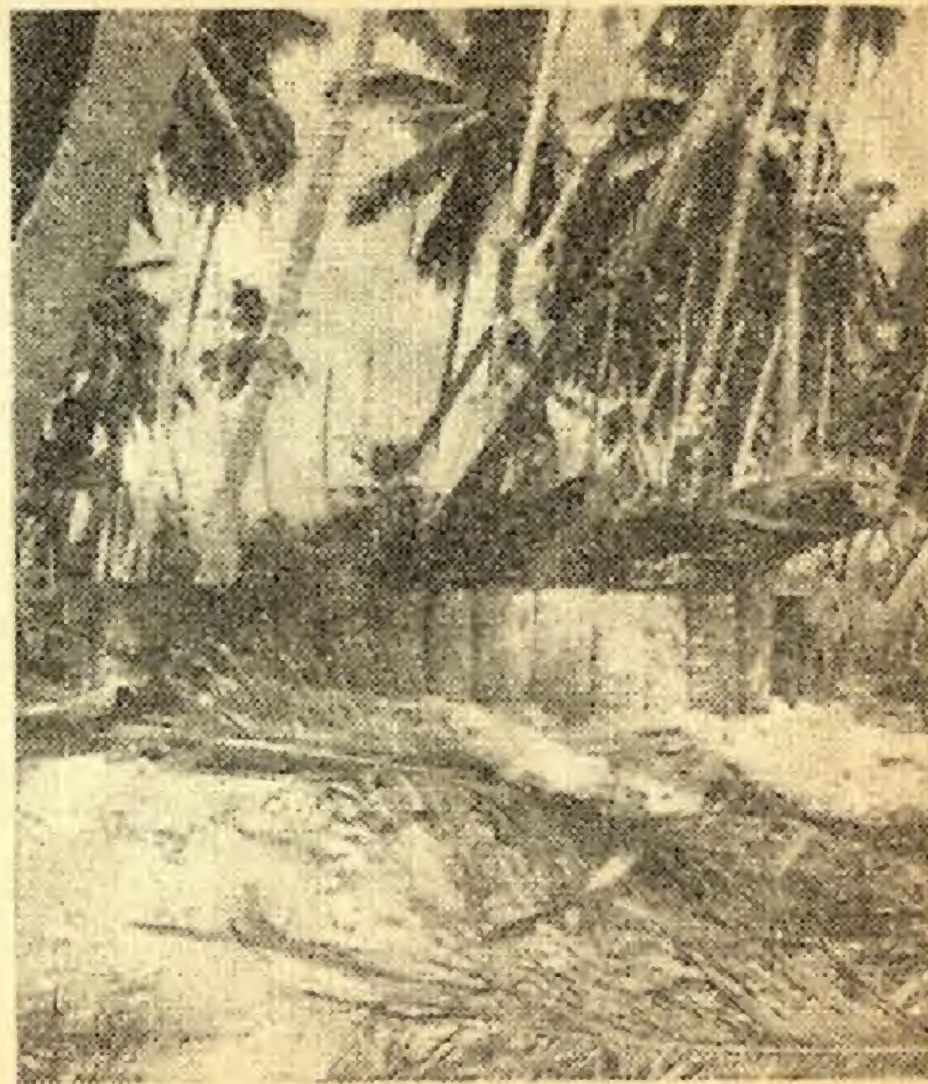


*Dummy 120-mm dual-purpose gun, complete with emplacement, built by the Japs on Guam.*





*Marines found these dummy Jap A.A. guns on the slopes of Mt. Tapotchau on Saipan*



*One of five dummy coast defense guns the Japs built from coconut logs and burlap on Makin.*





*Dummy tank sculptured by the laps out of the soft volcanic ash that covers Iwo Jima.*





*The Japs provided a dummy crew for this realistic dummy AA/AT gun on Okinawa.*





*Intentionally careless camouflage increases the deceptiveness of a dummy airplane on Okinawa.*

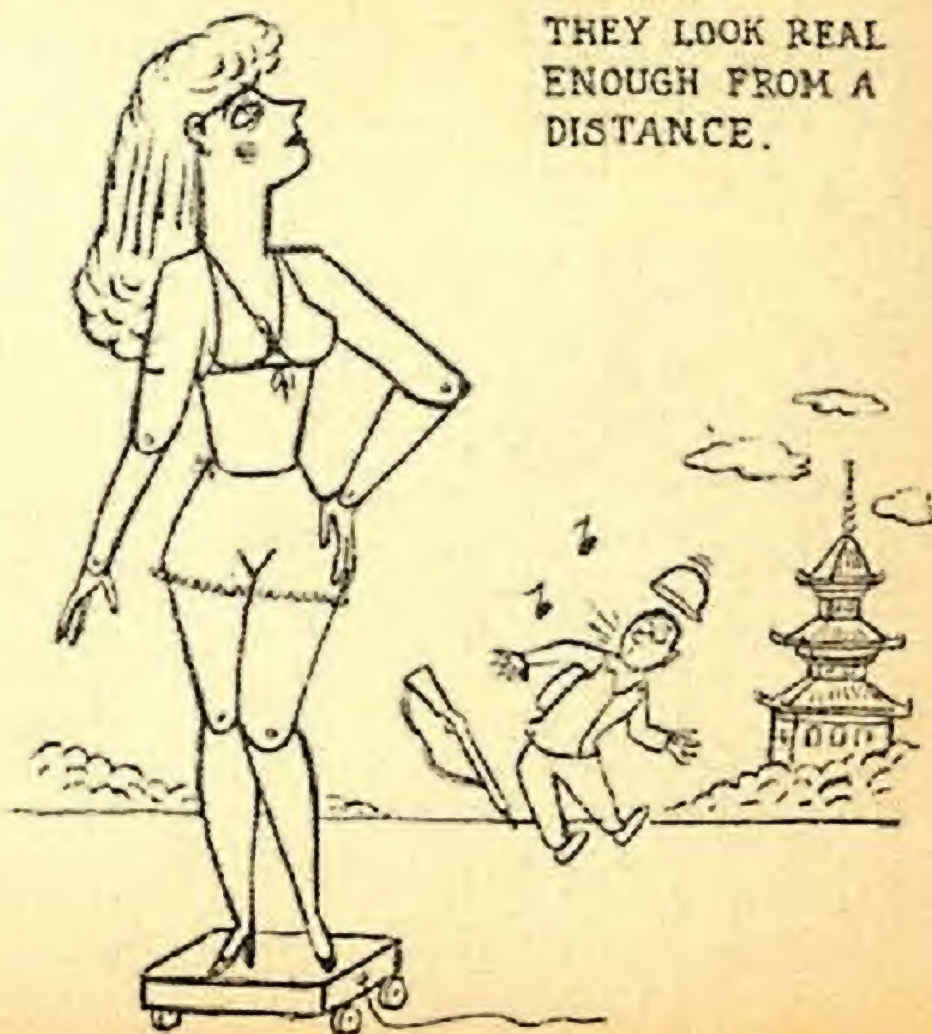


Three dummy guns were found on Makin Island. Three of these, on the west coast, looked like coast defense guns. They were placed so they "guarded" the best stretch of landing beach on the west side of the island. The gun barrels were coconut logs with burlap wrapped around the "muzzle". The mounts were also made of burlap-wrapped coconut logs. The three guns on the east coast were built in coral-stone revetments, while the other two were placed in positions constructed of coconut logs, which projected from 1 to 3½ feet out of the ground.

In New Guinea the Japs prepared dummy defenses in fairly obvious positions to draw our attackers into prepared lanes of fire.

Dummy searchlights and dummy range finders, complete even to dummy figures of crews, were set up near a Japan beach. Increasingly realistic dummy planes are being planted in growing numbers on Jap airstrips. Dummy tanks and tankettes are built in elaborate detail. A dummy antiaircraft battery was made of bamboo logs set in white sand where the contrast in colors would attract attention. Close up these positions fool nobody, but from any distance at all they often look real enough to draw large amounts of ground, air, and naval fire.

LIKE MOST  
DUMMIES —  
THEY LOOK REAL  
ENOUGH FROM A  
DISTANCE.





I KNOW THE LOCATION  
OF EVERY MINE IN  
THIS AREA, MY BOY.



THERE'S  
ONE NOW!





## CHAPTER 6. ANTIPERSONNEL MINES

The Japs' use of land mines is on the rise. Two Jima was very heavily mined against both vehicles and personnel, and key areas on Okinawa were even more thickly mined. During 25 and 26 May, approximately 1,000 land mines were removed in the areas south and west of Yonabaru. These mines were a typical assortment of used artillery shells, 500-pound aerial bombs, torpedo warheads, and standard land mines.

The Japs have lagged behind other modern armies in producing standard antipersonnel mines, but their new Type 3 mines, besides being very difficult to detect because of their nonmetallic construction, are fitted with combination pressure-pull fuzes sensitive enough to be detonated by personnel as well as vehicles. Also, they have designed antipersonnel fuzes that they substitute for the original fuzes in their "tape-measure" antitank mine and have devised various improvised charges that are effective against personnel.

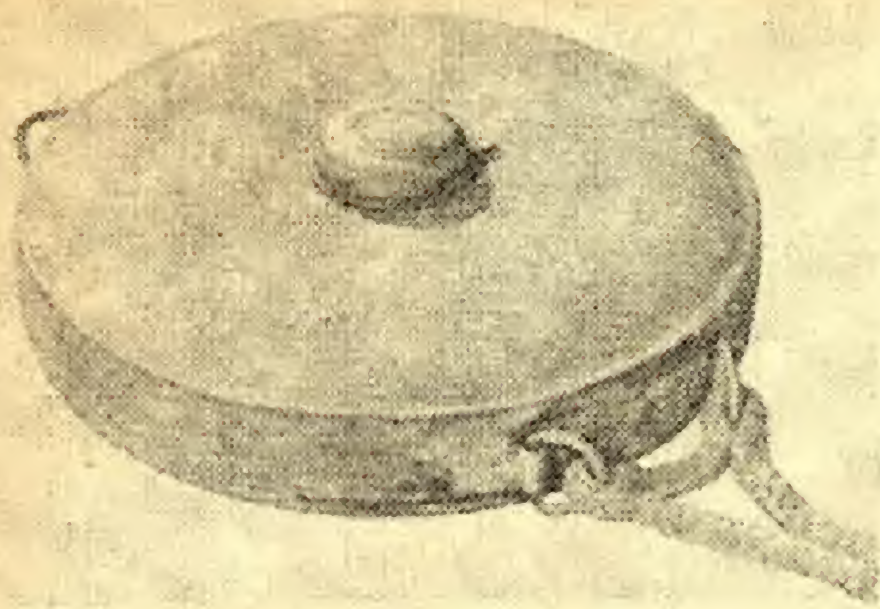
Until recently, the Japs sited their antipersonnel mines haphazardly or at random along likely routes of our advance

or in bivouac areas, wire entanglements, obstacles, abandoned trenches, and antitank minefields. This random use continues, but deliberate antipersonnel minefields are now being encountered. No very clear patterns have yet emerged, but there appears to be a tendency to scatter Type 3 pottery or wooden-box mines in pairs, with the mines in each pair 6 to 8 feet apart and usually joined by green trip wires.

Another recent development is the use of antilifting devices with Jap mines. In Burma not long ago, 20 out of a field of 100 tape-measure mines were found to be equipped with an antilifting booby trap consisting of a pull igniter and detonator inserted into a cloth sack of picric acid explosive. A string ran from the rings on the sides of the mines to the pull igniter.

Booby-trapped Jap mines are still relatively rare, but a safe rule is never to move or attempt to disarm an enemy mine without first making a thorough search for attached booby traps. In fact, give the mine a wide berth unless you've been specifically taught how to deal with it.





## TAPE-MEASURE MINE

The Type 93 (1933) mine, usually known as the tape-measure mine because it looks like a rolled-up steel tape measure, was designed as an antitank mine, requiring a pressure of 250 pounds to set it off. But the Japs now often fit it with a sensitive antipersonnel fuze, operated by a pressure varying from 25 to 70 pounds. The only difference between the fuzes is the size of the shear wire.

On Betio the Japs placed tape-measure mines with anti-

personnel fuzes in patterns of diagonal rows, about 30 inches apart. On Iwo Jima, two out of every three tape-measure mines were fitted with the sensitive fuze.

The tape-measure mine consists of a tan or olive-drab circular metal container,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches thick, filled with 2 pounds of picric acid explosive. The mine weighs 3 pounds. A round brass disk screwed into the center of the top covers the percussion fuze. The mine functions when pressure on the fuze cuts the shear wire, allowing the striker to pierce the detonator.

Because of their small charges, tape-measure mines are often laid in pairs, or in tiers of three or four. In many cases they are used as initiators for larger buried charges such as torpedo warheads, depth charges, aerial bombs, or picric acid.

To neutralize the Type 93 mine—after that careful search for an attached booby trap—unscrew the milled brass plug without moving the mine or exerting any pressure on it. Normally each mine is provided with a safety cap to be screwed over the top of the striker and a safety cylinder to be placed over the cap. However, these devices probably won't be available and the wisest



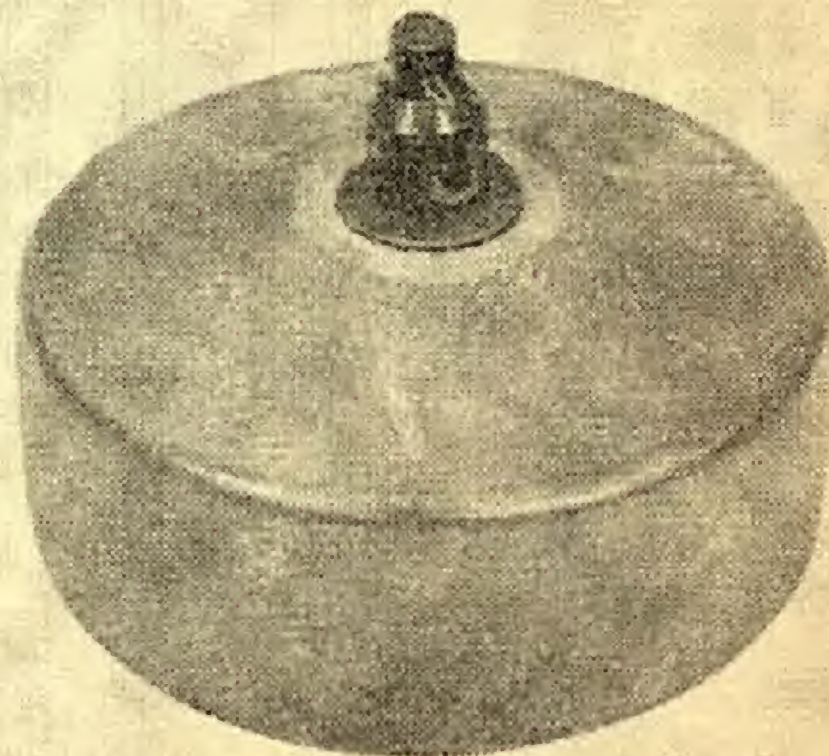
plan is to destroy the mine in place, although it may be made safe by unscrewing the complete fuze. Buried tape measure mines must be uncovered with special care since the Japs sometimes place them upside down.

## NONMETALLIC MINES

The Type 3 (1943), Model A is a nonmetallic land mine recently developed by the Japs and used in some quantity on Iwo Jima, where it proved an effective anti-personnel obstacle. The mine consists of a cylindrical main body of terra cotta or pottery with a slightly domed top. It is  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, 4 inches high in the center, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches high at the edge. It is filled with  $4\frac{1}{2}$  pounds of explosive contained in a rubber bag. The fuze fits in a rubber seating in the center of the top of the mine. Two types of combination pull-pressure fuzes are used, both working on the spring-loaded striker principle. The striker is held in place by a release fork, to which is attached a 45 foot green trip cord.

Pressure on the fuze or a pull on the cord dislodges the release fork and allows the striker to fall, setting off the mine, which has an effective antipersonnel radius of about 10 yards. The Japs claim that pressure of  $4\frac{1}{2}$

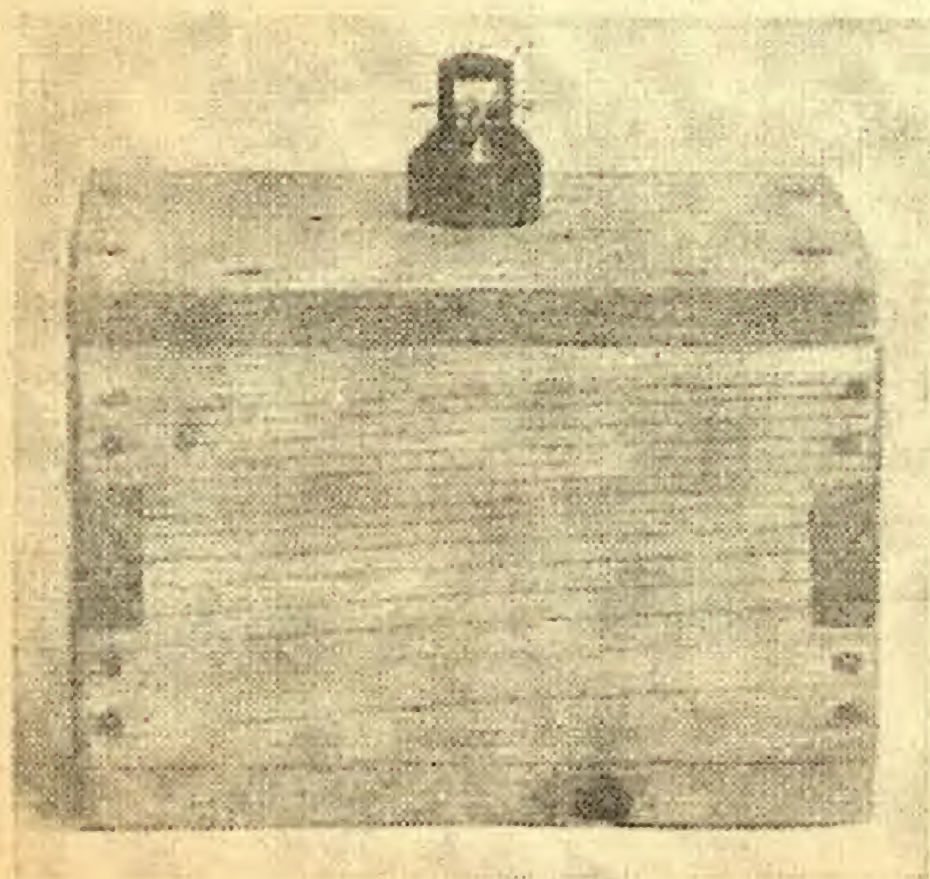
pounds or a pull of 22 pounds is enough to detonate the mine. Probably quite a bit more pressure than  $4\frac{1}{2}$



*The plastic fuze of the Jap Type 3, Model A pottery mine operates by either pull or pressure.*



pounds is necessary, but a filled GI shoe will do the trick. Tests show that a pull of 4 to 5 pounds will set off the mine.



*The Type 3, Model B mines uses the same fuzes as the Model A. The nails make it easier to detect.*

To neutralize the mine, insert a safety pin or small nail in the striker head, then unscrew the fuze.

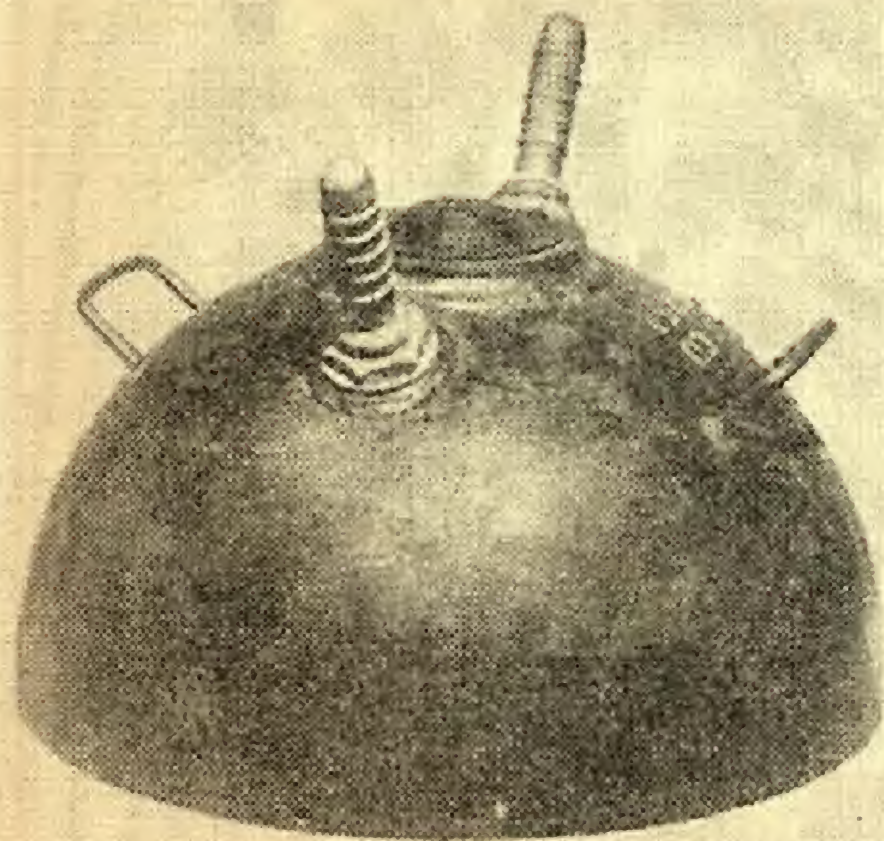
A larger version of this mine, measuring 10½ inches in diameter and containing about 6½ pounds of explosive, has been reported.

The Type 3, Model B mine, first recovered on Iwo Jima, uses the same fuze, charge, and rubber fuze-seating as the Model A. But the outer casing is a well-made wooden box, 7½ inches square and 5 inches high. This mine is probably less dangerous than the pottery model because the wooden container has little fragmentation effect.

On Iwo Jima, the Japs laid two fairly extensive anti-personnel minefields using Type 3 mines fixed for detonation by either pressure or trip wire. The fields were laid in irregular patterns, with the mines scattered in pairs, each pair 6 to 8 feet apart and usually connected with green trip wires. Type 3 mines were also found in abandoned trenches.

According to the Japs, the fuzes from these nonmetallic mines are interchangeable with certain standard artillery fuzes, which makes it possible to convert any common mortar or howitzer shell into a very effective land mine or booby trap. They may also be inserted into a block of picric acid, TNT, or other explosive and used similarly.





*If bent or crushed, the horns of this hemispherical anti-boat mine will explode 46½ pounds of explosive.*

## BEACH MINES

Until late in 1944, the Japs made their most determined mining efforts on beaches as a defense against our landing operations. The mines most often encountered in beach areas have been the double-horn hemispherical anti-boat mine, Type 98, and the single-horn "teakettle" anti-boat mine. Both of these mines are intended primarily to destroy or damage landing boats and vehicles, but they are also effective against personnel and so constitute a danger to the individual soldier.

The double-horn mine has a hemispherical shape with the two ringed horns near the top. The mine explodes when either horn is bent or crushed, breaking an acid-filled vial. Contact of the acid with battery plates generates electricity that detonates the mine. The single-horn mine, which functions in the same way, resembles a metal cone with one horn on top. Both types are painted black. The hemispherical mine weighs slightly over 100 pounds while the conical mine weighs about 70 pounds. The horizontal pull required to bend the horn and break the acid vial of either mine is about 200 pounds at the outermost ring.

These mines have been found buried so that all but





*The Japs sometimes attach trip wires to the horn of their sea-kettle mine, most often found on beaches.*

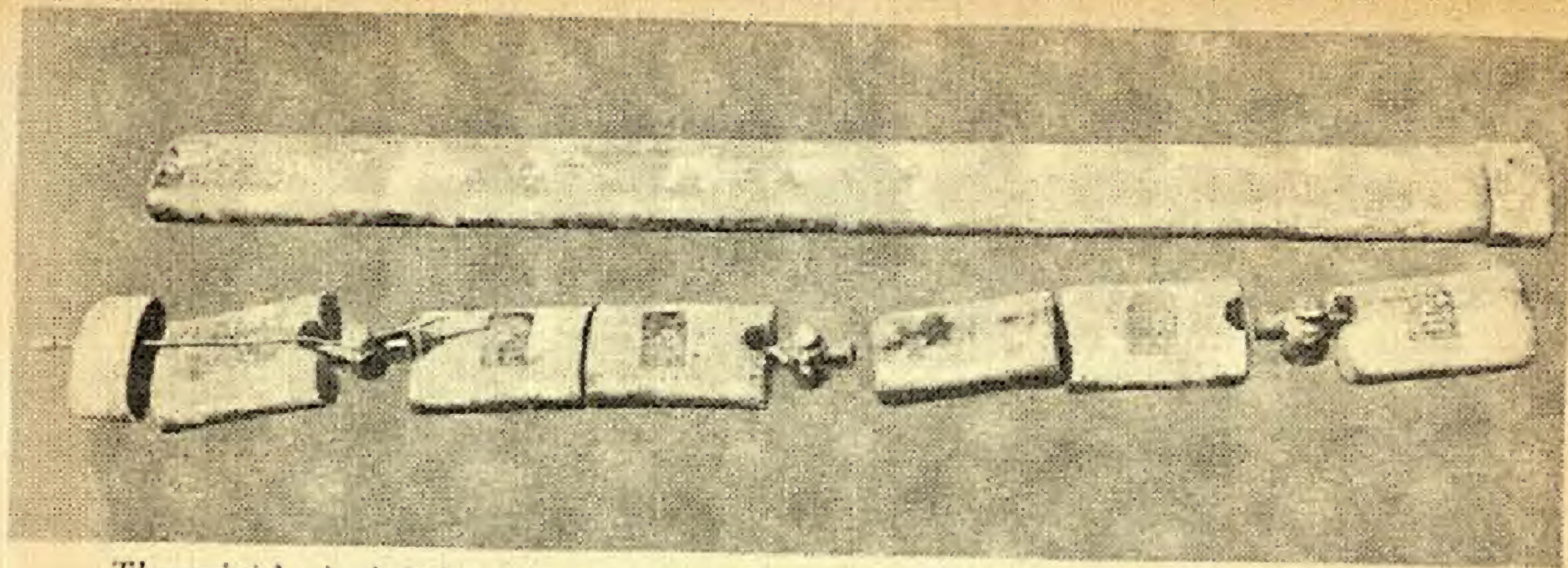
the horns are concealed, but in other cases the whole mine was exposed. Frequently the Japs have connected trip wires between the horns of adjacent mines or between the mines and nearby obstacles so that a pull on the wire would detonate the mines.

These horned mines should be moved only when absolutely necessary. Each mine is supplied with two carrying handles and should be carried by two men, being especially careful not to touch the horns and moving the mine only as far as necessary to clear the area. The actual removal of the fuzes should be left to bomb disposal parties, since booby-trapping of the fuzes within the mines is quite easy.

### YARDSTICK MINE

A fourth type of Jap mine that is dangerous to personnel as well as vehicles is the "yardstick" mine, so-called because of its flat-oval shape and 36-inch length. The shape and olive-drab color of the steel case make it easy to conceal in soil or loose trash. The mine contains eight  $\frac{3}{4}$ -pound blocks of picric acid explosive shaped to receive a maximum of four pressure fuzes, although most mines examined have been fitted with only three fuzes. A pressure on the mine case of 335 pounds shears the shear





*The yardstick mine is designed for use against tanks and other vehicles but is also dangerous to personnel.*

pin of one or more of the fuzes and forces down the release plunger.

If the shear pin is removed, a pressure of as little as 4 pounds will cause the fuze to function. The strength of the case, however, limits use of the assembled mine as an antipersonnel weapon. When the Japs use this mine against personnel, they generally remove the blocks of explosive from the case and set out a single pair with

its detonator. The shear pin may be removed entirely, or a shear wire thin enough to break under a man's weight may be substituted.

Yardstick mines are also used as detonators for bombs laid horizontally.

To neutralize the fuze of this mine, insert an improvised safety pin in the safety-wire hole located just below the head of the release plunger.

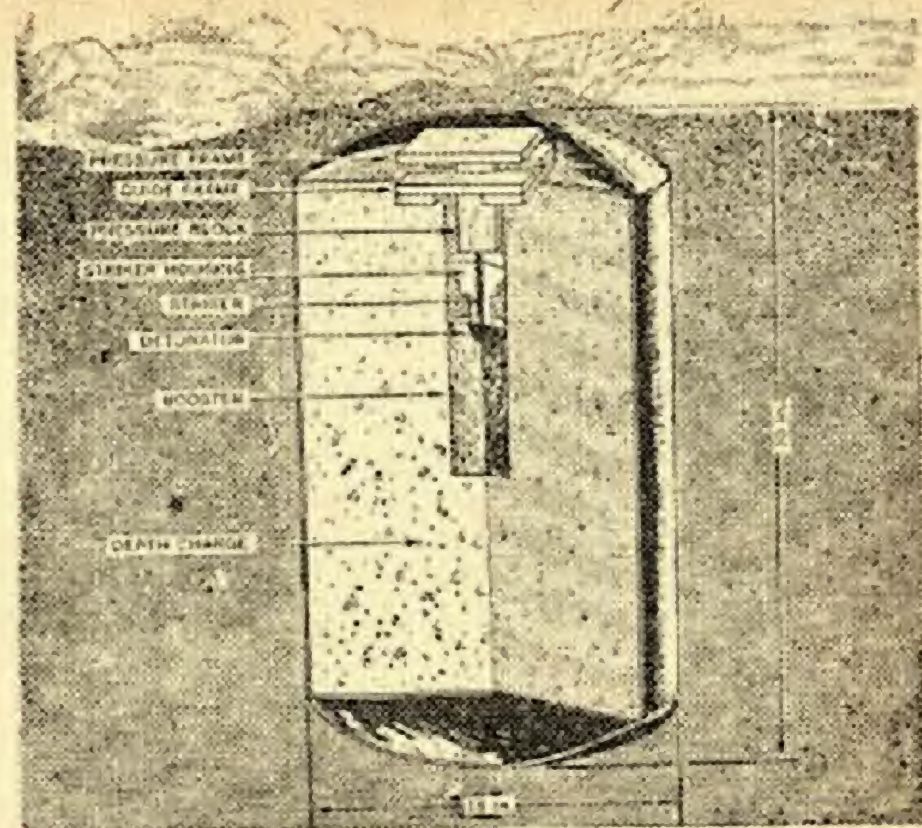


## IMPROVISED MINES

The Japs have improvised antipersonnel mines from aerial bombs, shells, and depth charges. In the town of Garapan on Saipan Island, 63-kg (138-pound) bombs were found buried tail-down in the streets with the nose fuzes armed. Some of the bombs were placed in obvious places so that personnel or vehicles attempting to avoid them would set off other better-concealed mines.

During the Salween campaign in Burma, mines were found that consisted of two 75-mm shells tied together with a primer-cap imbedded in the nose of one shell. The shells usually were supplemented by 20 pounds of explosive. The shells and explosive were placed in holes dug in roads or paths and covered by a camouflaged board cover supported over the hole at ground level by light bamboo sticks. Various arrangements with string were used for igniting the primer-cap in the shell. In some cases the hole was a dummy and the actual mine was buried off to one side, connected so that it would be exploded when the cover over the hole was lifted.

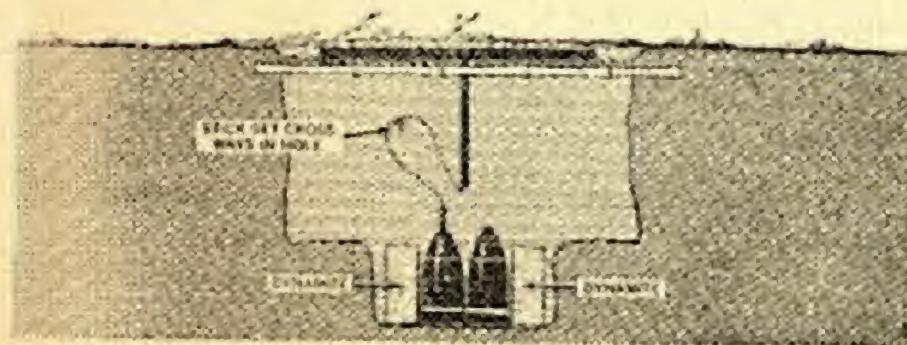
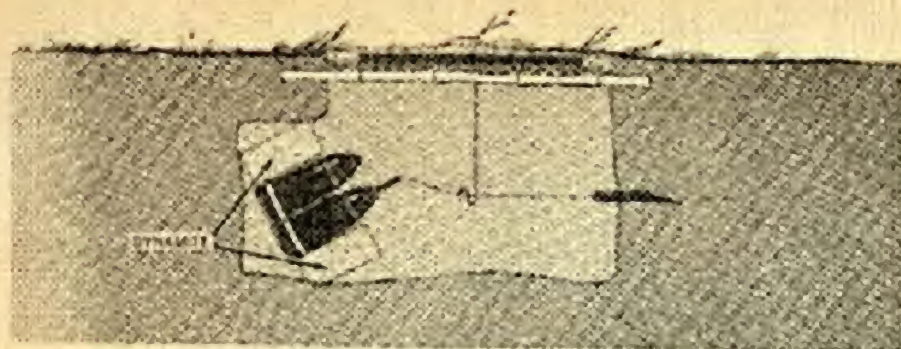
Depth charges were found on Luzon Island with an 8-inch-square pressure board connected to the striker by a wooden block, as shown in the sketch on this page.



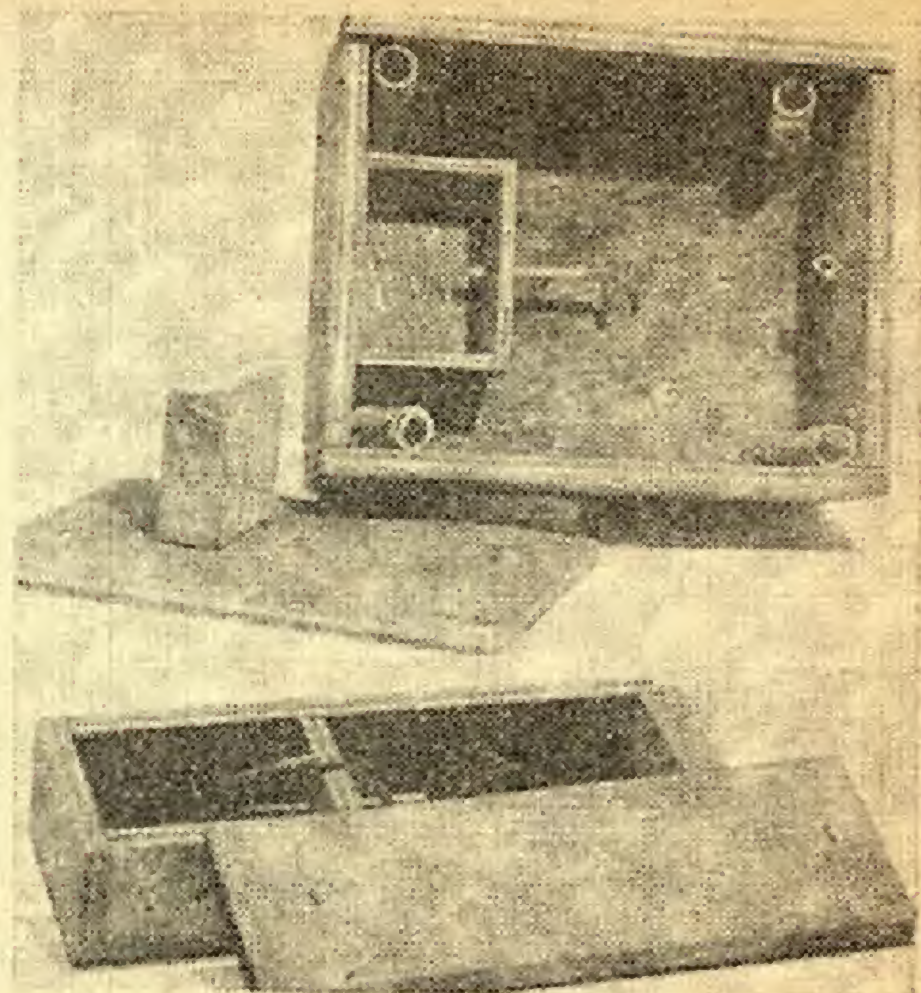
Weight applied to the pressure board forced the striker down on the detonator, setting off the booster and in turn the main charge.

The Japs have also built various wooden-box mines fitted with either pull or combination pressure-pull friction



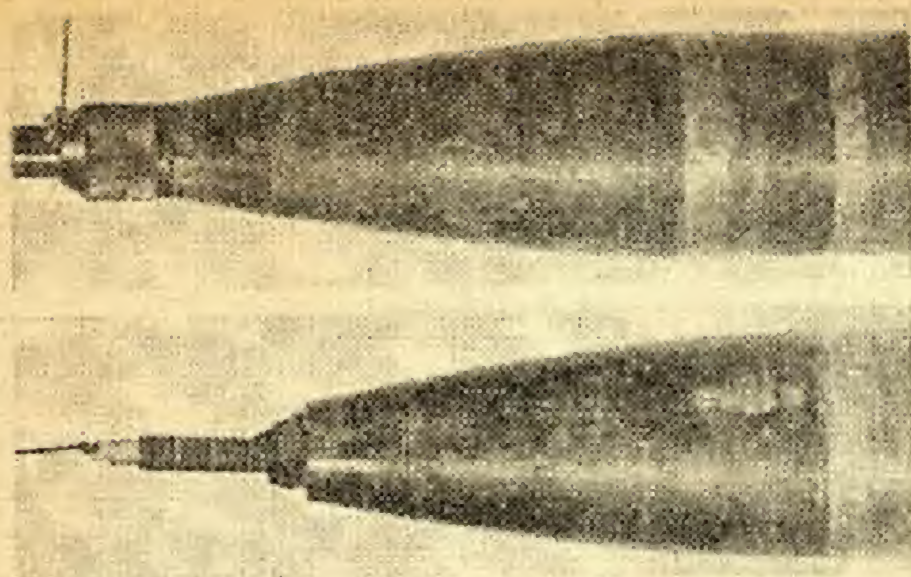


Two ways the Japs have used artillery shells and dynamite in improvised mines. The mine above functions when weight on the board cover pulls the igniter in one of the shells. The mine below can be exploded either by pressure on the cover or by lifting the cover.



Typical Jap box mines. The top mine is a triple threat; pressure on the cover, a pull on the trip wire, or lifting the box will set it off. Lifting the lower mine or pulling its trip wire flashes the friction fuse.





*Substituting a Type 3 mine fuze (above) or a friction pull igniter (below) for the normal fuze of an artillery shell converts it to a land mine.*

fuzes and equipped with supplementary booby-trap wires that function when the mine is lifted. These are used against both tanks and personnel. An example of each type is shown on the preceding page.

Other mines are improvised—as shown above—by substituting for the normal fuzes of artillery shells friction pull fuzes or the combination pull-pressure fuzes used with Type 3 mines.

A metal "tool-box" mine was recovered in the Clark Field area on Luzon. The outer casing is a standard tin, olive-drab packing box about  $20\frac{1}{4}$  inches long,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, and  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches deep. The mine weighs about 33 pounds, and contains 100 small blocks of explosive wrapped in long sticks of ten with waterproof wrapping. Two standard Jap fuzes of the type used in the tape-measure mine protrude from the top of the box. As with the tape-measure mine, the shear wire may be varied in thickness, varying the pressure required to detonate the mine. The amount of explosive charge may also be varied, according to the type of target. When the mine is buried, the pressure release devices of the two fuzes are just above the surface of the ground. One mine was discovered by a soldier who thought the brass dome of the fuze was a coin lying on the ground. A board may be placed over both fuzes to increase the chances of the mine being exploded. The mines weren't laid in any definite pattern on Luzon. The commonest use was along trails and unimproved roads in the valleys and defiles of the Zambales Mountains, where they were usually placed singly in locations selected by individual Jap soldiers at their own discretion.





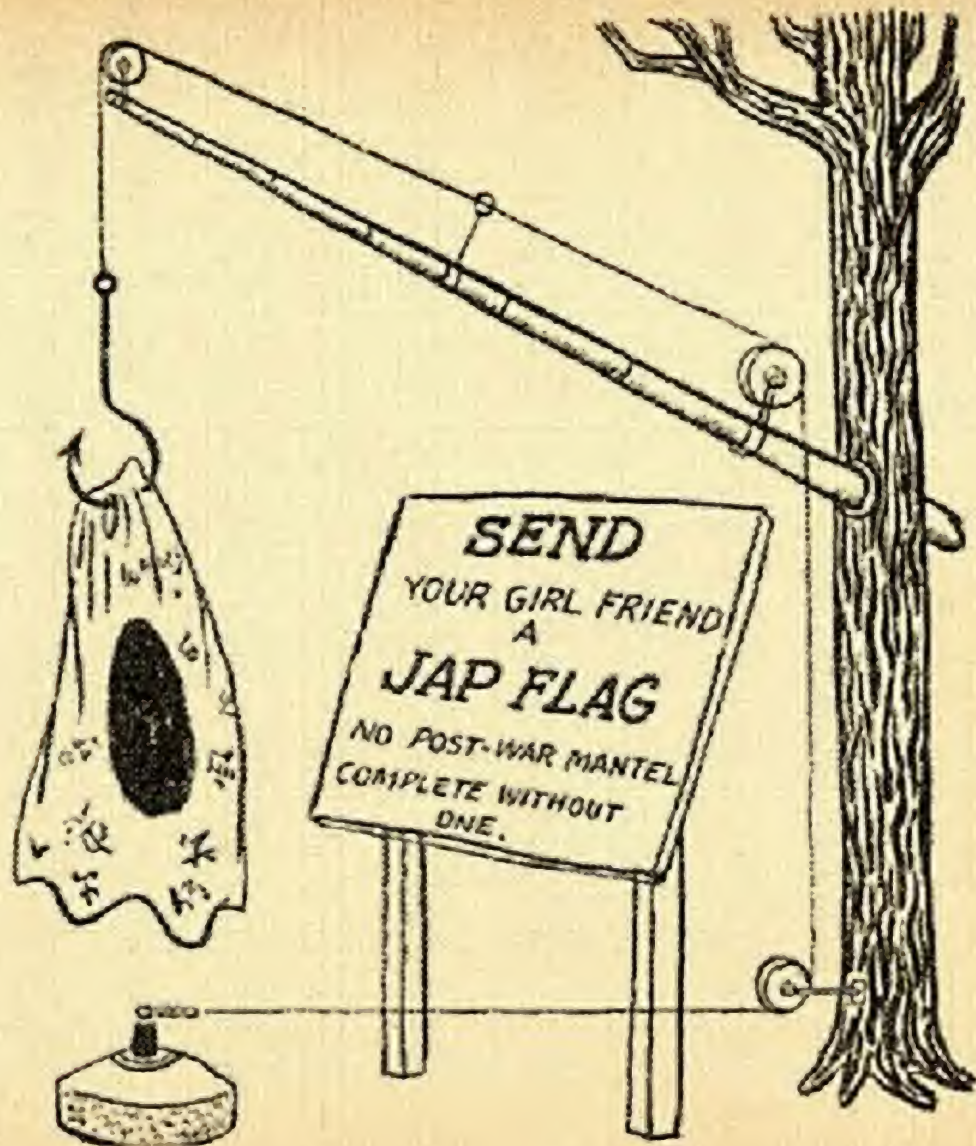
HERE COMES  
A FOURTH!



MINE FIELD  
BEWARE









## CHAPTER 7. BOOBY TRAPS

The Japs, like the Germans, love gadgets. A Jap tourist climbing Mt. Fuji, like a German tourist visiting Old Heidelberg, is—or was—never without his camera. It was not, however, quite as good a camera as the German's, and the pictures that came out of it were usually out of focus or light-struck; the photo of Mt. Fuji looked very much like the photo of grandmother Nikimoto on her 88th birthday. The truth is, the average Jap isn't too bright at mechanical matters. Nevertheless he keeps on trying.

The booby trap appeals to the Jap's fondness for gadgets, and it also appeals to his fondness for underhand tactics. Moreover, it's particularly useful to a retreating force. So far the Japs have done less booby-trapping than the Germans did, and their traps have shown less ingenuity. The Japs have been handicapped, for one thing, by a lack of prefabricated firing devices. As a consequence, they've been driven to a more than ordinary amount of improvisation, much of it crude. But they're right in there pitching. The scale of Jap booby-trapping has steadily increased and probably will continue to do so.

On the whole, there is nothing particularly new or

unusual about Jap booby traps. They use familiar principles, methods, and materials. Hand grenades, mortar and artillery shells, TNT, nitric acid, glycerine and benzine, aerial bombs—any of these may be used. The Japs also favor charges of picric acid explosive, a lemon-yellow, crystalline solid, more powerful than TNT. They take advantage of jungle or brush to conceal trip wires, and bait their traps with swords, flags, and other items that they know will tempt souvenir-hunting Allied soldiers. Or they may, adding that little personal Jap touch, use dead or wounded for bait.

### HAND-GRENADE PRESSURE TRAPS

Hand grenades, being readily available, easily concealed, and quickly set, are widely used by the Japs for constructing booby traps. There are at least five known types of Jap high-explosive hand grenades, all of which can be adapted for booby-trapping. The Type 91 (1931) and Type 97 (1937) are almost identical fragmentation grenades with serrated (waffle-grid) steel bodies. The Type 99 (1939) is smaller and has a smooth cylindrical



body. The Type 23 grenade—a Chinese design infrequently encountered in recent operations—is especially useful for booby traps because it has a pull-type friction igniter. The Japs also have a potato-masher type grenade which has a pull igniter in the wooden handle.

The Type 91, Type 97, and Type 99 grenades can all be used in pressure-type booby traps without altering the igniters, though their effectiveness is increased if the delay powder train is removed, bringing about instantaneous operation. These three grenades are fitted with fuzes that are initiated by a blow or pressure on the striker. The usual delay is 4 to 5 seconds.

Any one of these Jap grenades, concealed under a board or loose rubbish, can be detonated by the pressure of a man's foot, since the weight of a single man is enough to set off the fuze. In a booby trap of this sort, the grenade may be placed either fuze down or fuze up. Neutralizing the trap is simple. Carefully uncover and remove the grenade, and insert the safety pin or a nail in the safety-pin hole.

The Japs have also used their Type 89 50-mm grenade-discharger shells in this type of trap, although they often forget to eliminate the safety feature in the shell fuze with the result that the booby trap is practically harmless.

On Leyte Jap hand grenades disguised as coconuts made their appearance. The shell of a coconut was filled with black powder with a hand grenade embedded in it, only the pressure detonator protruding. This provides a cleverly camouflaged explosive charge for use in pressure-type booby traps. Crude, box-type antipersonnel charges, employing the same principle of grenade detonation as the coconut mine, also are common. They have been found in the grass along roads and placed beneath staircases and floors in buildings containing ammunition.

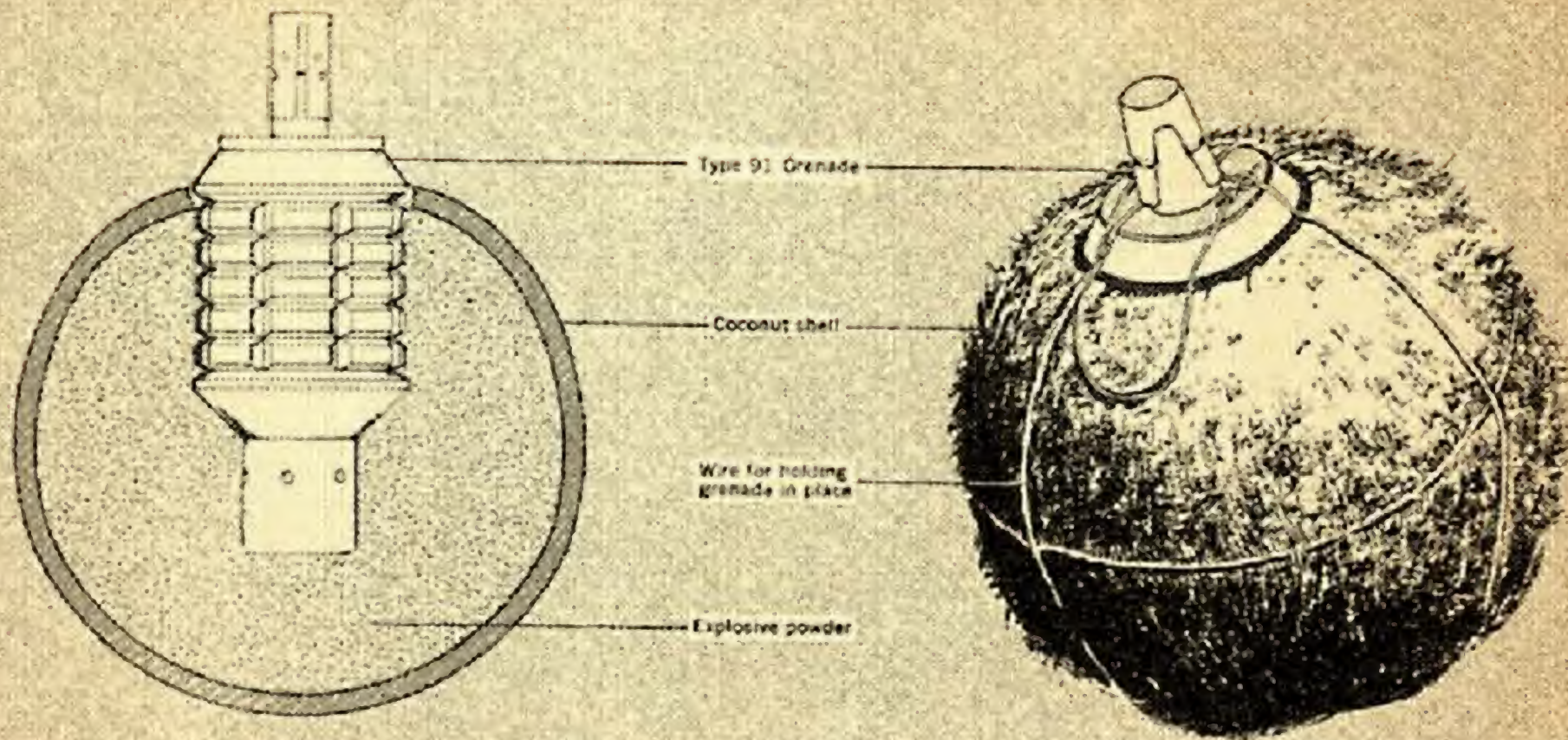
## PULL-TYPE GRENADE TRAPS

The Japs have invented ways of using their pressure-type hand grenades in pull-type booby traps without altering the fuzes. One way is to suspend the grenade by a strip of cloth tied with a quick-release knot to the door of a shelter, house, gun position, command post, or other structure. Opening the door releases the knot, dropping the grenade on its striker. If the delay powder train has been removed, the explosion is instantaneous.

Or the trap may be rigged so that opening the door withdraws a supporting pin or breaks a supporting string.

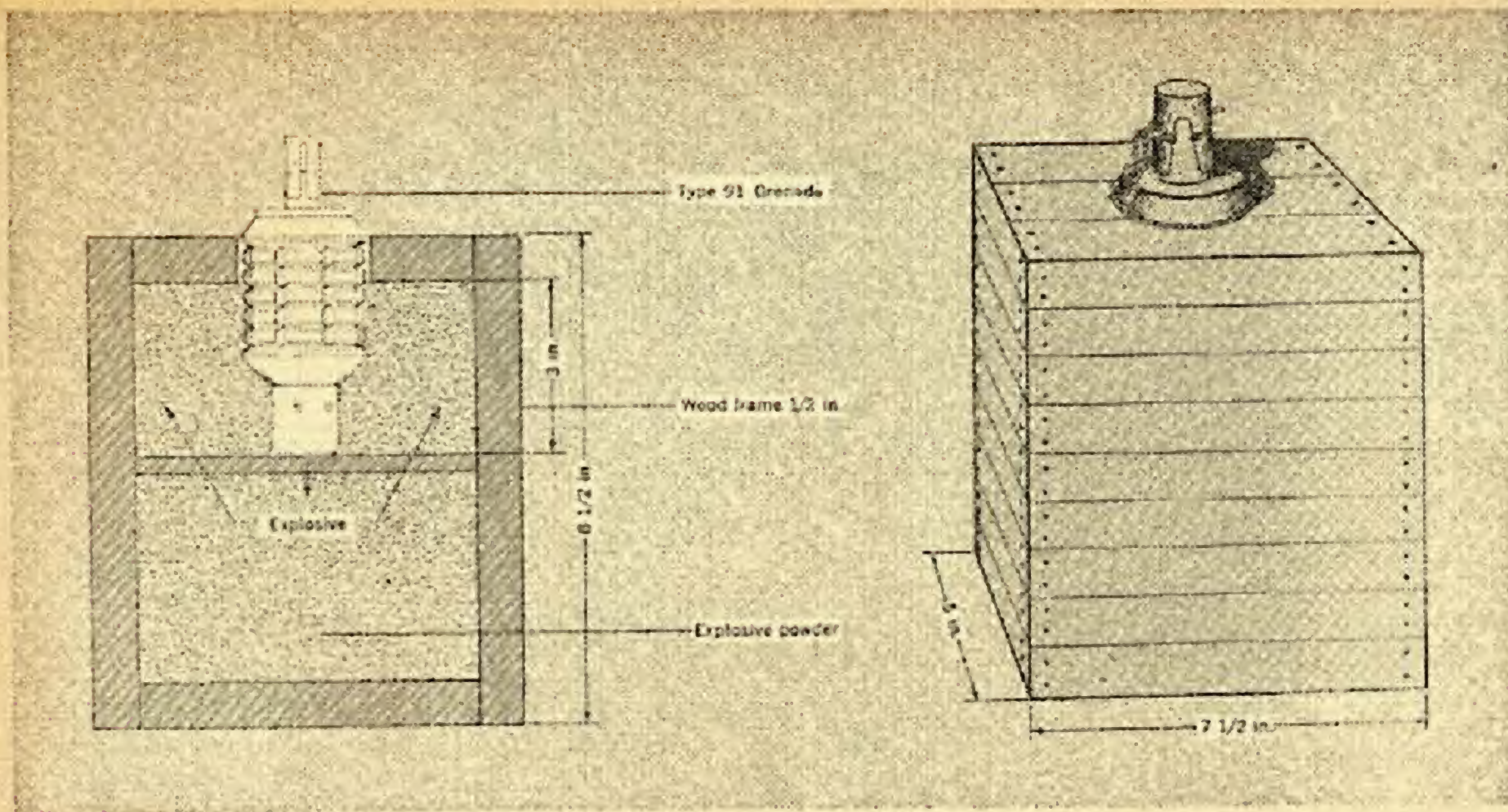
The grenades are sometimes supplemented by a 50-mm grenade-discharger shell, grenade and shell being wired





*Here is how the Jap coconut booby trap is made. A sharp blow on the safety cap of the grenade sets it off.*





*This improvised box booby trap operates in the same way as the coconut booby trap.*

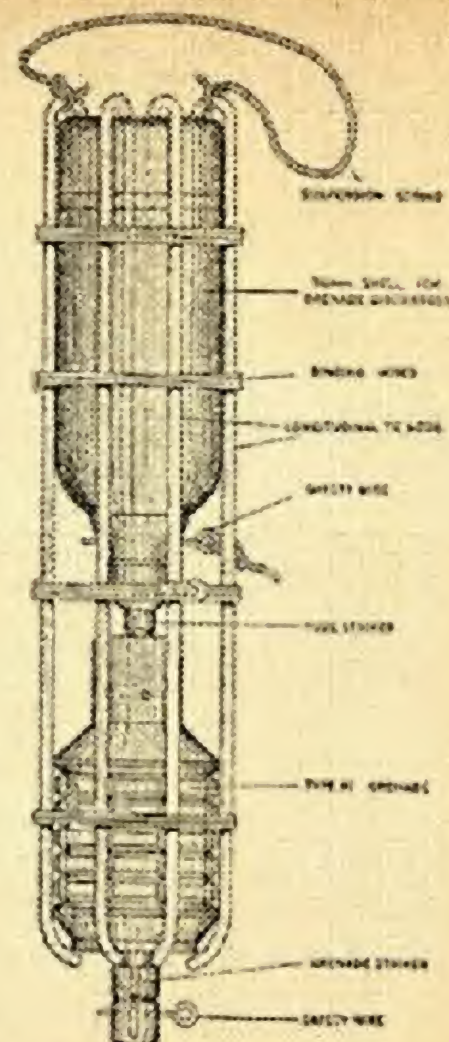


together to increase the effect of the explosion. Like many other Jap ideas, however, this is a poor one, since the grenade seldom explodes the shell.

Grenades fitted with pull-type fuzes have been used more successfully. Given sufficient time before quitting an area, the Japs may be expected to convert virtually any movable object into a pull-type booby trap.

Our infantrymen on Leyte found that the Japs had attached coconuts to grenades by strings. When the coconuts were picked up, the grenade pin was pulled out and the grenade exploded. Bamboo poles were similarly rigged, anticipating that our troops would pick up the poles to make huts or cover foxholes. Sometimes the grenades were placed inside the coconuts or in the hollow ends of the bamboo poles, with the pull string tied to any nearby stationary object.

A particularly Japworthy scheme reported from numerous Pacific areas is this: The Japs have placed hand grenades or packages of picric acid (on Guam they used American hand grenades) in the armpits, underneath, or tied to the legs of their or our unburied dead. The grenades exploded if the bodies were moved. The Japs have also, on more than one occasion, booby-trapped their own wounded in the same way.



*Jap hand grenade and grenade discharger shell wired together as a booby-trap charge.*



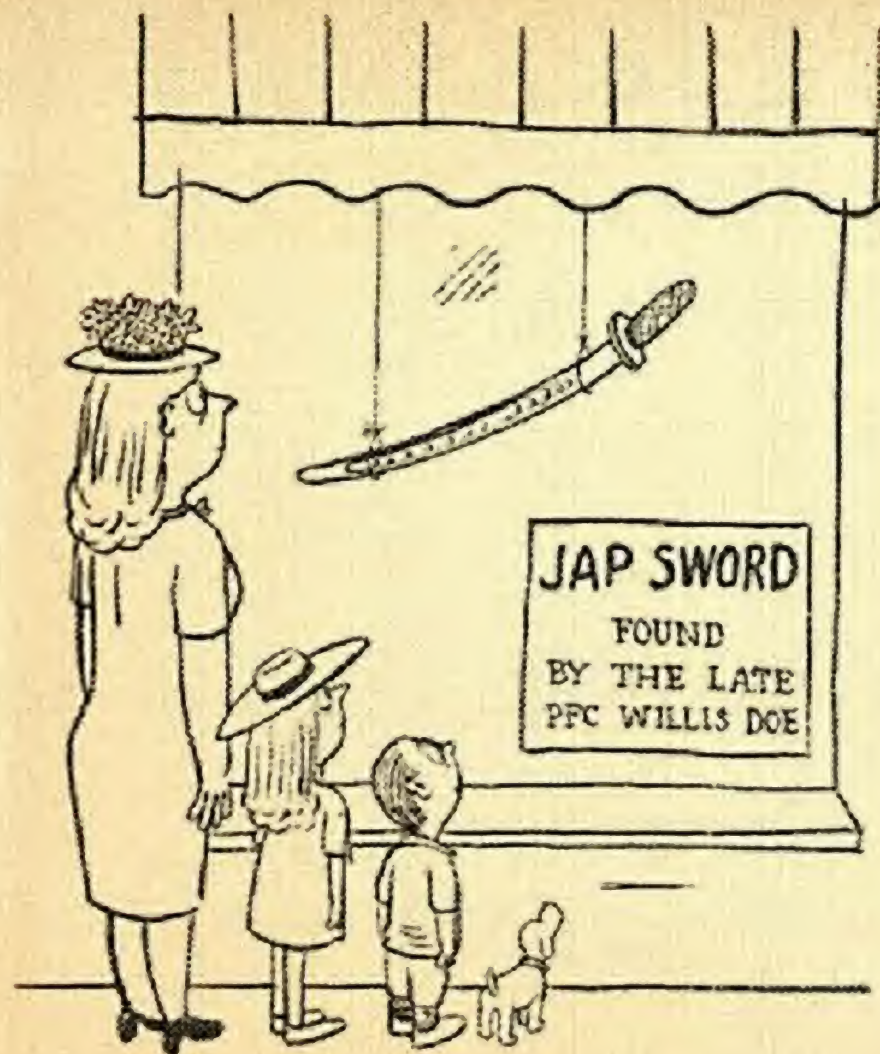
## EXPLOSIVE GROCERIES

It looks like an ordinary can of preserved strawberries such as you might find on the shelves of your neighborhood A & P. But it blows up in your face if you lift it. Jap explosive groceries were first encountered near Hsenwi, Burma, and were also found in the Philippines. The cans, about 2½ inches in diameter and 4¾ inches high, are marked with standard-brand U. S. labels. A hole in the side of the can is fitted with a threaded brass adapter to receive a brass fuze of the quick-match, pull-type design. The Japs tied the igniters to stationary objects, and the "fruit" exploded instantaneously if the can was picked up. Or one booby-trapped can might be included in a case of genuine canned fruit, with the pull fuze fixed to explode when the cans were lifted out. The can in the photograph happens to be Libby's pineapple. Any other counterfeit label may be used. A likely location for these traps is a captured rations dump.

Explosive toothpaste belongs to the same school. An ordinary popular-brand toothpaste tube is filled with high explosive and fuzed to function in the same way as the tin-can traps. The detonator fits into the opening for the cap.







The Japs have also planted explosive soap. An explosive or incendiary charge is molded to represent a bar of bath soap. The word "Ivory" is embossed on one side, and "Procter and Gamble" on the other. A primer is located in a recess on one side of the charge. The Aussies reporting this didn't make clear just how the charge was rigged for ignition, but most likely a pull-type friction igniter is used to cause an explosion if the soap bar is picked up.

These booby traps can all be easily neutralized by finding the wire or cord connected to the igniter. Cut this cord and then the dummy soap, tube, or can may be moved without danger.

### SOUVENIR HUNTERS BEWARE

The sword of a Jap officer looks fine on a Peoria mantlepiece. But the soldier who picks one up on the battlefield may never get back to Peoria. The Japs, knowing our liking for souvenirs, make a habit of using their swords or other personal equipment as booby-trap bait.

In many cases the booby-trapped equipment is still attached to the body of a dead Jap—his wristwatch, for example, still running. But a pull igniter and explosive charge are also attached.



Or the equipment may be scattered carelessly as though abandoned in flight or lost during an action. In one area our troops came upon sandbags filled with pictures of geisha girls and odds and ends of Jap equipment. Underneath the souvenirs in each bag were 4 or 5 pounds of explosive provided with a pull igniter and detonator. The traps were easily neutralized by locating and drawing out or cutting out the igniter.

The Japs on Saipan often carried their personal possessions in a sock, and American soldiers overrunning a

Jap bivouac area got used to picking up these socks and shaking out the souvenirs. Now and again, instead of chop sticks, a Jap flag, and ten-yen notes, a sock would contain a U. S. hand grenade with the safety pin pulled.

An American staff sergeant on Leyte found a Jap pistol on the ground. He was an old hand: suspicious of a booby trap he tied a string to the pistol and pulled it from a distance. When there was no explosion, he claimed the pistol as a souvenir. Later on, when he snapped the cocking piece the weapon exploded, blowing off his hand.





A majority of the large number of Jap planes captured intact on Peleliu were booby-trapped with either anti-personnel mines or grenades. In spite of warnings issued by Intelligence personnel, several souvenir hunters were killed and the planes—very valuable for intelligence purposes—were demolished. The same thing has frequently happened in the case of other captured matériel.

Common articles which the Japs converted into booby traps early in the war included pipes, fountain pens, flashlights, and umbrellas.

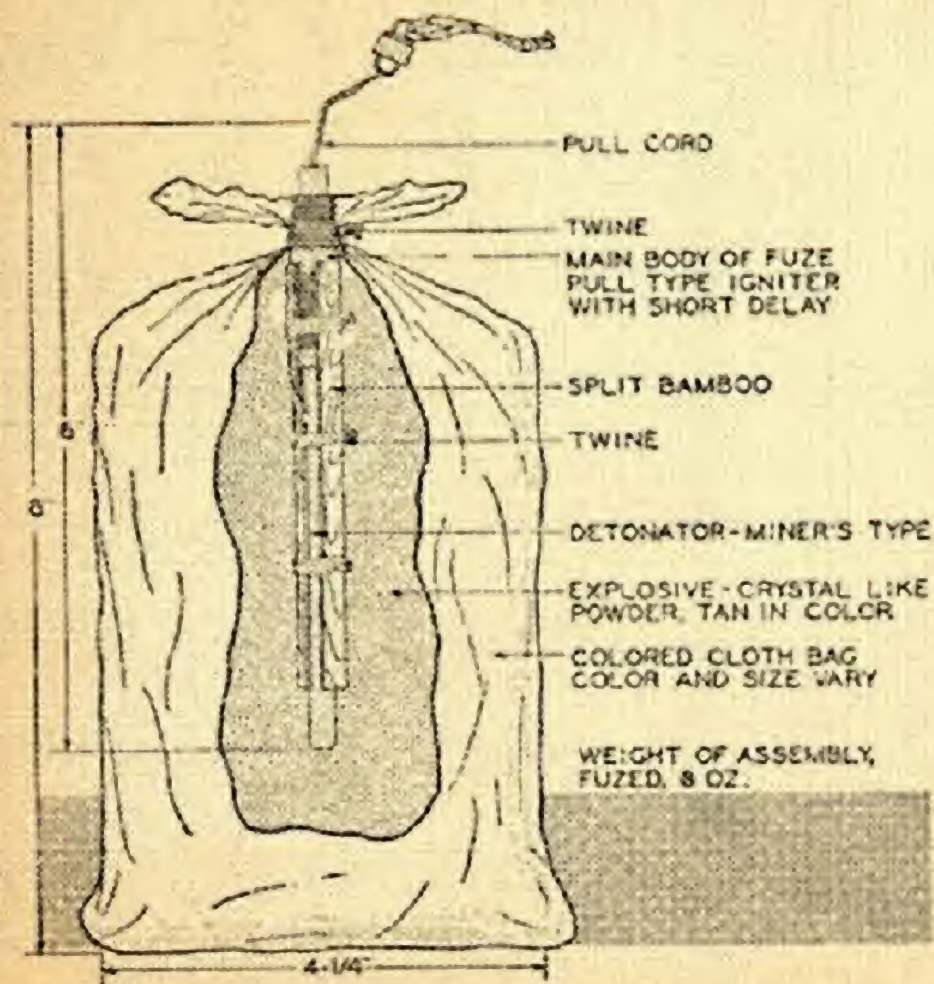
## MORE PULL-TYPE TRAPS

Other Jap pull-type booby traps use mortar shells, artillery shells, or various improvised explosive charges.

In Burma, the Japs used wooden boxes, about 10 inches long, 7 inches wide, and 8 inches deep, filled with possibly 5 pounds of picric acid explosive. The boxes were fitted with pull-type igniters, with the pull string tied to a potential souvenir or other object. Small sandbags were sometimes substituted for the wooden boxes.

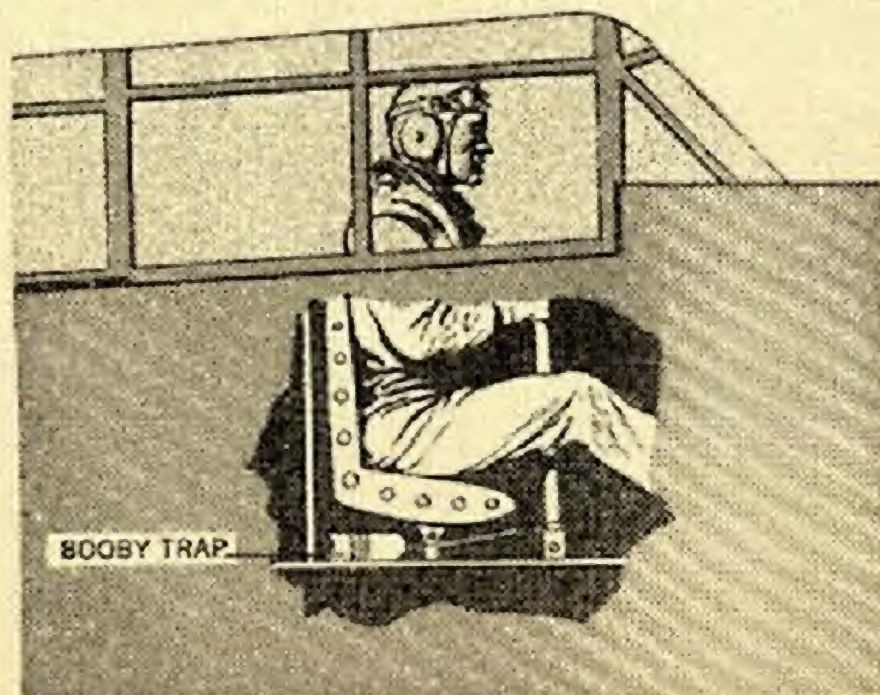






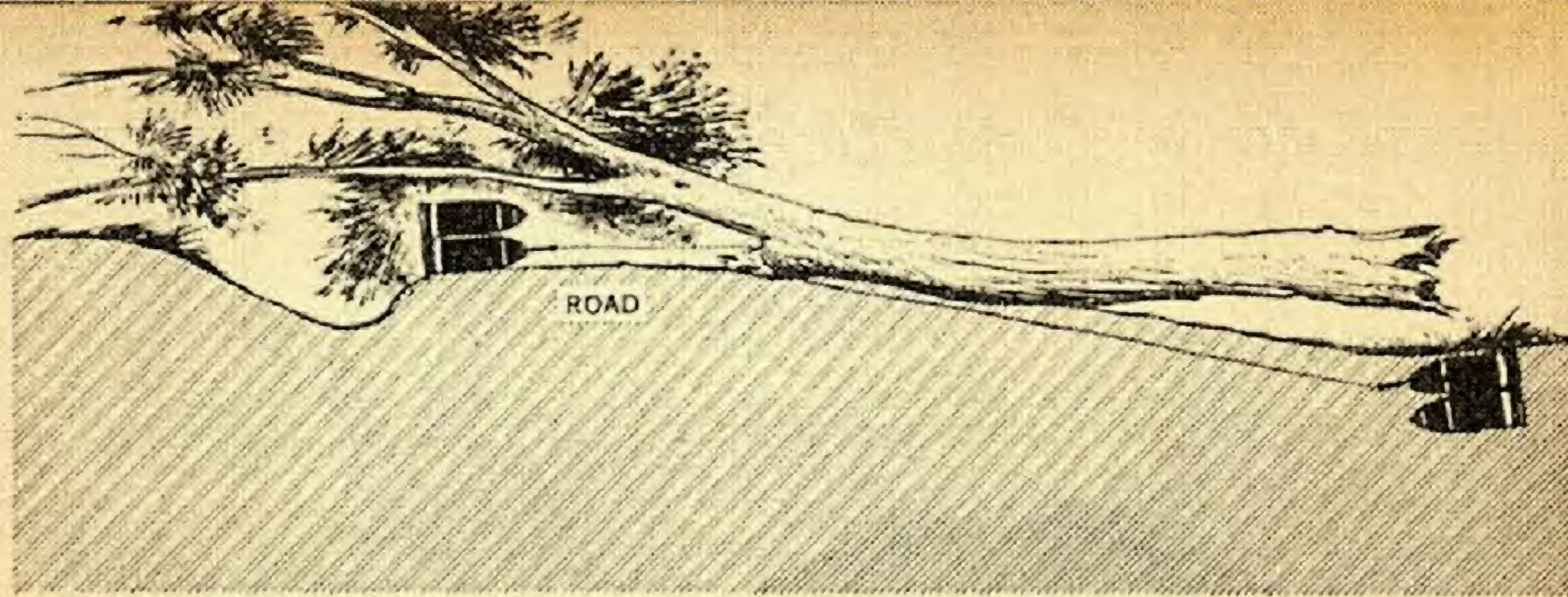
*Booby trap demolition bag.*

The cloth-bag demolition device shown on this page has been encountered in Leyte, Saipan, Okinawa, and Burma. The bag, containing just over a quarter pound of explosive, was equipped with a pull igniter, short delay, and detonator. Colored white, light blue, or pink, the bags averaged about 8 inches long and 4½ inches wide, a handy size for booby-trapping almost any object.



*One way the cloth-bag demolition can be used to booby-trap a plane.*





*Given time, the Japs will always booby-trap their road blocks. Artillery shells with pull fuzes are used here.*

A super-simple pull-type trap used by the Japs consists of iron spikes taped around a charge of dynamite that contains a pull igniter. They have also improvised booby traps by connecting igniters to cases of ammunition and dynamite placed along the sides of roads.

A Jap light machine gun was found with a wire attached to the cocking handle and connected to a British-pattern pull switch. From this an instantaneous fuse led to a buried British mine.

An obstacle was booby-trapped by tying together two 75-mm shells and imbedding a primer-cap in the nose of one shell. A pull string ran from the primer to the obstacle, so that anyone taking down the obstacle would spring the trap. The Japs usually place two such booby traps at each road block or obstacle. This same method was used in Burma to booby-trap sacks of rice.

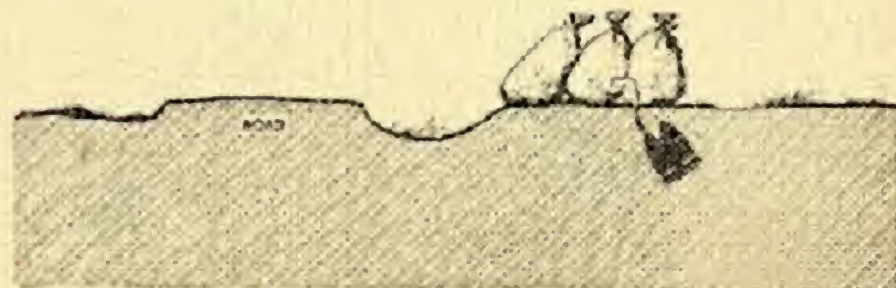
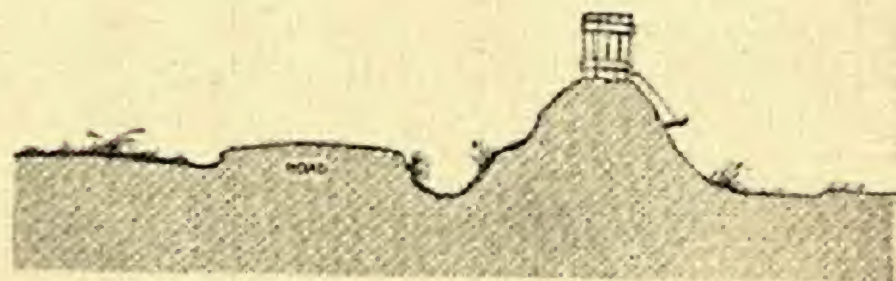
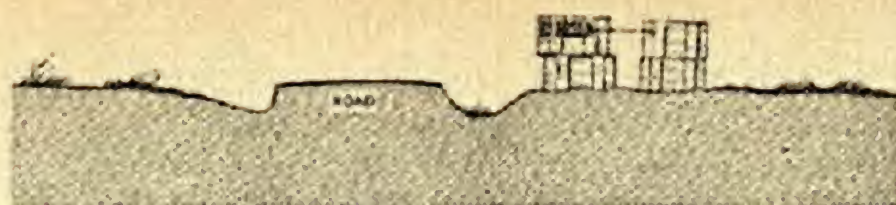
In the Kalewa area of Burma, coconuts were found that had been cut in half, emptied of their meat, filled



with picric acid, and joined together again. Pull-type igniters were inserted for attachment to stationary objects. Merely kicking or knocking the coconuts about was enough to explode the booby trap.

Retreating Jap troops in northern Luzon booby-trapped abandoned stacks of ammunition so ingeniously that the traps were discovered only at the price of several lives. In a typical trap, 90 cases of 50-mm grenades and small-arms ammunition were neatly stacked six cases high within a revetment cut into the side of a hill. This revetment was large enough only for the munitions. Entrance and encirclement weren't possible on the ground level, and inspection could be made only at one end and from above. Seen from the embankment, the site resembled a poor attempt at concealing a pillbox. Loose dirt, twigs, and grass were thrown on top of a roof consisting of two sheets of corrugated iron and a plywood door from a nearby house. This apparent casualness of preparation was a deliberate plant.

Fastened beneath the roof to long branches were six pull-type friction igniters fixed in box-type mines. These mines were placed directly on top of the stacks of munitions and carried the entire weight of the roof. Any attempt to move any portion of the roof would almost



*Typical Jap pull-type booby traps along a roadside, using stacked ammunition boxes, a precariously balanced box of dynamite, and sacks of rice.*



certainly pull at least one of the igniters, detonate the picric acid contents of the box mine, and initiate explosion of the ammunition.

In the same area one of these mines was wrapped in a camouflage net that entirely concealed it, and set in an empty wooden box. Anyone unrolling the net would undoubtedly pull the igniter.

## PRESSURE-RELEASE TRAPS

Lacking suitable igniters, the Japs have not made much use of booby traps that function on pressure release. They have, however, improvised a few such traps from available material, including captured equipment.

In one case an American 81-mm mortar shell, lashed to a plank, was laid on top of a British hand grenade so as to maintain pressure on the grenade fuze. Any movement of the plank, which was set across the entrance to a dugout, would have exploded the grenade, which in turn was intended to explode the mortar shell.

## TRAPS SET WITH TRIP WIRES

Like all other armies, the Japs make wide use of trip wires in setting booby traps. Particularly in the jungle,

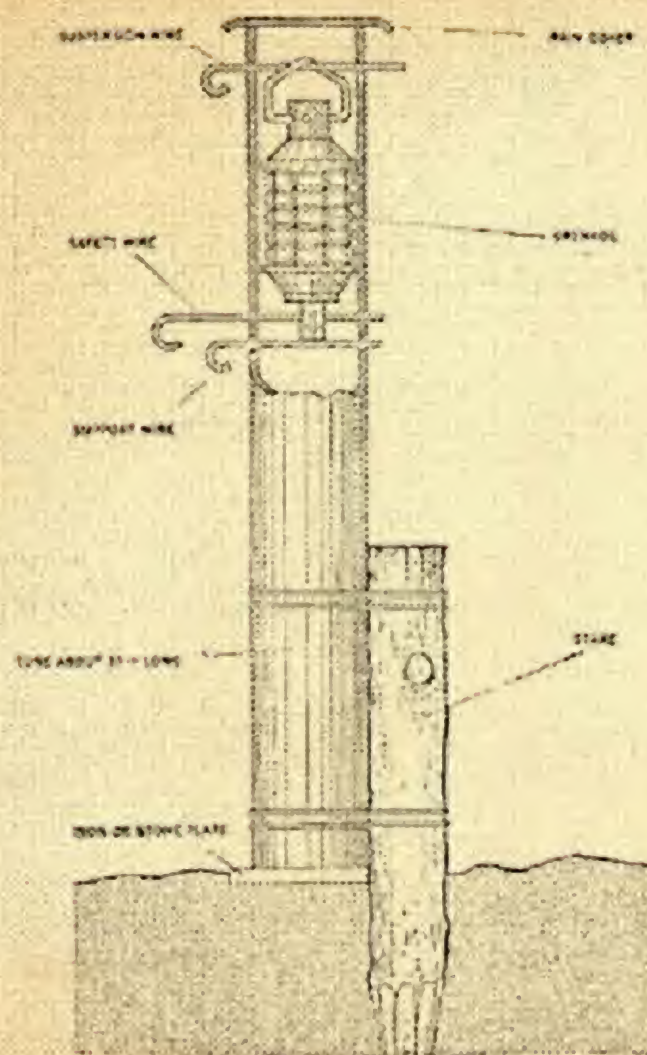


*Simple trip-wire booby trap using two Jap hand grenades. The trip wires are normally hidden by undergrowth.*

trip wires may be expected across tracks leading to Jap positions. These wires may operate either when they're cut or when they're pulled out of position. Some of the Jap trip-wire traps are very clumsily devised, but others are cleverly constructed and craftily concealed. The trip wire may set off a warning device rather than a booby trap. But in either case, taut wires should not be cut, and slack wires should not be pulled.

With trip wires the Japs again use their own hand grenades extensively. A light string may be passed between two trees, straddling a trail, with a grenade at each end. A man passing down the trail breaks the string,





*Jap hand grenade suspended in tube for booby-trapping.*

dropping the grenades fuze-foremost onto flat rocks placed underneath them. Or a grenade may be enclosed in a 75-mm fuze can with the striker down and both inserted in an artillery shell case. The fuze can is supported within the shell case by a pin, which is tied to the trip wire. The far end of the wire it attached to a spring, weight, or elastic stick, to make sure the pin is withdrawn when the wire is tripped. For greater effect, plastic explosives may be packed into the extra space in the fuze can.

This same method may be used with hollow bamboo sticks about 2 feet long in place of shell cases. These traps can be neutralized quickly by cutting the trip wires, removing the grenades, and replacing the safety pins. Investigate both ends of the trip wire before you cut it, however, to be sure you know exactly what kind of trap you are dealing with.

British Mark I and No. 36 hand grenades have also figured fairly extensively in Jap trip-wire booby traps. In a recent engagement in Burma, the Japs used booby traps on an unusually large scale in an attempt to block the approach to a center of resistance. More than 100 booby traps were set in a jungle-covered area 100 yards wide and 200 yards long on a high and narrow ridge.



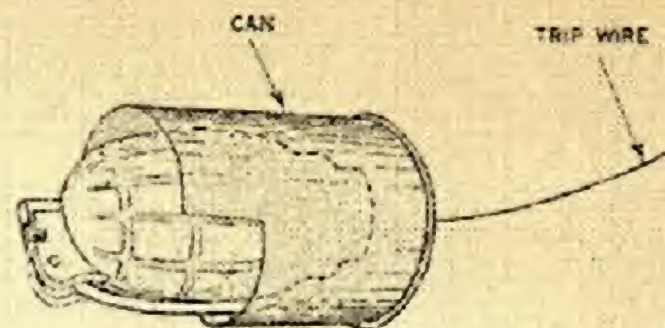
All of these traps were made with British No. 36 grenades. Two methods were used.

In one method, a tin can with one end and a part of the side cut away was tied to the trip wire. A grenade, with safety pin removed, was placed in the can so that its release handle was held fast.

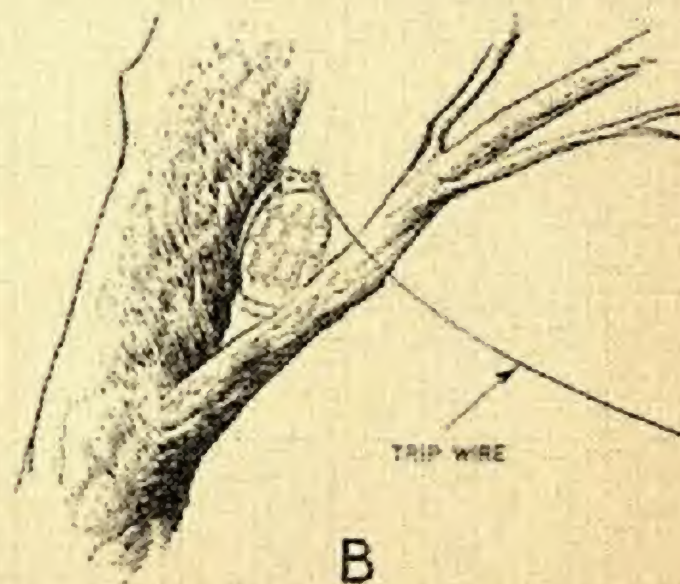
The grenade and can were placed either on the ground or in a tree. Pulling the trip wire would draw the can away from the grenade and free the release handle, detonating the grenade.

The second method was to place a grenade, with safety pin pulled, in a tree fork so that the release handle was held down by a branch. A string attached to the grenade was placed as a trip wire. When the string was tripped, the grenade fell out of the tree fork, the handle was released, and the grenade exploded. The wires used in rigging these booby traps were strung loose in the heavy undergrowth or attached to long vines and creepers. Ordinary telephone wire was used for trip wires with no attempt to improve on the camouflage afforded by the dense vegetation.

In the Arakan, along the coast of Burma, the Japs used a small prefabricated booby-trap device. It was very simply constructed and intended to be used with a trip



A



B

*Two ways the Japanese use British hand grenades in trip-wire booby traps.*



wire. The container for the explosive charge looked like an ordinary round tin can,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  by  $3\frac{7}{16}$  inches, and probably contained picric acid. The firing mechanism, a pull igniter, protruded from the middle of the side of the can.

Another prefabricated charge, this one made of wood, consisted of a strong box, 8 by 10 by 12 inches, filled with explosive. This was normally equipped with two igniter assemblies to which trip wires could be attached.

Other Jap trip-wire booby traps have used Bangalore torpedoes as the explosive charge. The Jap torpedo consists of an explosive charge placed in a piece of ordinary iron pipe, 2 inches in diameter and 40 inches long, with a cap on each end. It can be further identified by a red ring painted around the pipe. The torpedo normally explodes after a delay of 6 to 7 seconds, but this delay may be eliminated when it is set as a booby trap. A trip wire can easily be tied to the braided cord connected with the friction igniter in one end of the pipe.

## ELECTRICAL TRAPS

An easy booby trap to set is the electrical one. Any vehicle, searchlight, generator, light circuit, or other electrical gear can be rigged so that the current will detonate

an explosive charge. Before any captured Jap equipment is handled, it should be examined for electrical as well as mechanical booby traps.

On Kiska in the Aleutians our troops found several examples of Jap electrical booby traps. In one building the pick-up arm of a phonograph had been rigged so that if the arm had been moved to play a record a circuit would have been closed to an electrical detonator, exploding a charge beneath the floor of the building. In another building a radio had been packed with TNT, ready to explode when the switch was turned on.

At an air-ground radio command post captured on Saipan, five charges, each consisting of ten small blocks of picric acid and a firing device, were connected in series with the transmitter so as to explode if the transmitter were energized. A sixth charge of the same composition was connected with a trip wire covering the entrance of the tent, and a seventh was connected to a rifle just outside the tent.

The Japs have also used a bamboo contact switch resembling a clothespin for constructing electrical booby traps. Single wires are run along the outer edges of the separate halves of the sawed-out bamboo stick, and



nut and bolt contacts are screwed into the ends. The wires are connected from the contact points to a dry cell battery and a charge of explosives. Two such booby traps were found on Kiska, both under boards at the entrances to caves, placed so that the weight of a person stepping on the board would bend the sections of the bamboo stick together and close the electrical circuit. In one trap the explosive charge consisted of two sake (rice

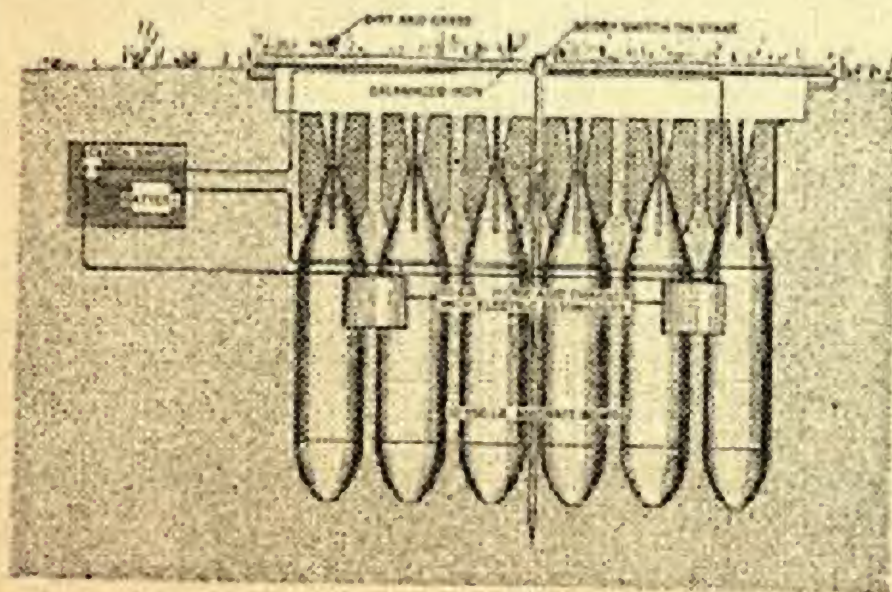
beer) bottles filled with loose picric acid and placed inside a 120-mm shell case. In the other, the explosive was a metal-covered block of picric acid weighing about 4 pounds. Electric blasting caps were used as initiators to set off the charges.

A brief search will usually reveal the wiring for electrical booby traps. Disconnecting or cutting all electrical leads will neutralize the traps.

## DELAY TRAPS

Retreating Japs may leave behind booby traps set for delayed detonation. In buildings they have used a trap constructed of two 75-mm shells tied together with an igniter imbedded in the nose of one shell. The shells are placed on an inclined board with a short pull string attached to the top of the board. A wire threaded through a shell case filled with acid paste supports the shells. When the acid eats through the wire, the shells slide down the inclined board, and the tension on the pull string operates the igniter. Delay in such an improvised mechanism can be varied by the diameter and material of the support wire or by the concentration of the acid.

Another delay trap, sketched on this page, was found



*Booby-trapped, buried charge of 50 aircraft bombs connected for electrical ignition by a delay switch.*



on an airfield in the Southwest Pacific. The explosive charge consisted of fifty 550-pound aerial bombs set nose-down in a ground pit covered by a galvanized iron plate and camouflaged with tufts of grass. Planted with the bombs were two separate 20-pound booster charges, each wired with two electric detonating caps. Fired electrically, this mine could be detonated either by a clock mechanism or by a booby switch. Wires were run from the detonating caps through a battery to the time clock and to the galvanized iron cover, which, when moved, would activate the booby switch. This switch consisted of a stick thrust through a hole in the plate. Exposed wires leading to the detonators were fixed to the stick 3 inches above and below the plate. Lifting or depressing the iron plate would cause the wires to touch the plate and close the circuit. The clock switch, which could be set for any time up to 24 hours, would otherwise eventually close the circuit. Both the clock and the battery were buried in tin containers.

## INCENDIARY TRAPS

Among the surprise packages the Japs leave behind when they vacate an area may be various types of incendiary booby traps.

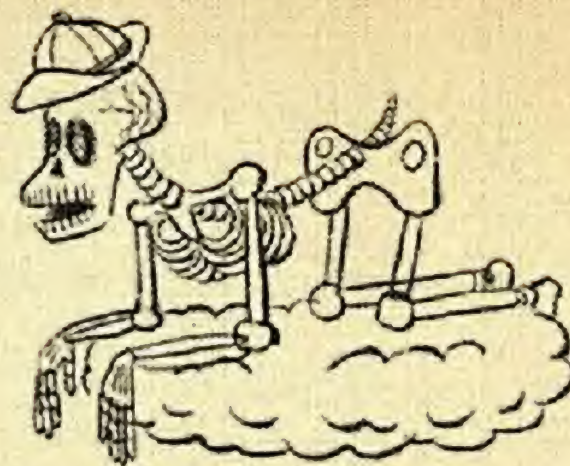
An ordinary bottle may contain separate portions of benzine and sulfuric acid, with potassium chlorate and some other substance as the stopper. If such a bottle is shaken or tipped over, the sulfuric acid comes into contact with the mixture in the stopper and causes a small explosion and ignition of the benzine.

A bamboo cylinder may be converted into an incendiary booby trap by inserting a tube containing layers of kerosene, cotton, glycerine, and probably nitric acid. This mixture will ignite after a certain length of time or when the tube is shaken or disturbed. The actual contents of incendiary traps of this sort left by retreating Japs have not been fully determined.

Another Jap device, which may be used either as a booby trap or demolition device, looks like a greenish-black celluloid cigar case. Three tubes are formed by the corrugated shape of the body. The middle tube contains the firing mechanism, while the outside tubes contain an incendiary mixture. This mechanism appears to be designed for use as an ignition device for inflammable material. The same is true of other demolition devices left behind by the Japs in retreat. Most of them, however, are capable of causing fatal injury to anyone setting them off.



BOYS, BOYS —  
LET'S NOT QUARREL  
OVER IT!









THIS JAP SOLDIER WAS SMART.  
BUT PFC JOE DOAKES WAS SMARTER. . .







